Dance and Dancers

MAY 1954

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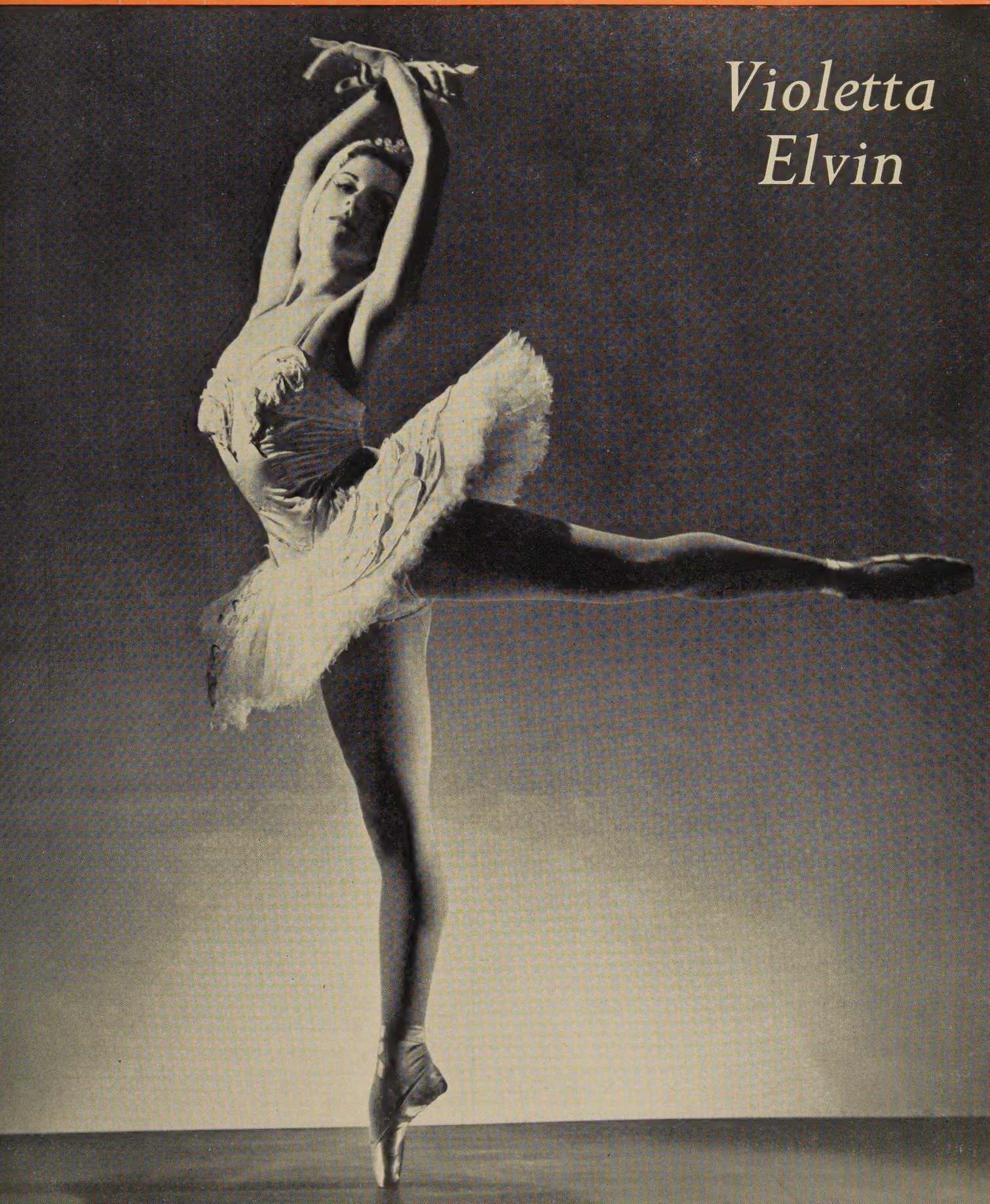

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Personality of the month

In Letter to the World

MARTHA GRAHAM **Reason: For creating a masterpiece, *Ardent Song*, at an age when most people have long since ceased to have any creative genius.**

THERE is a psychological moment in all our lives when we can best absorb great works of art. Some of us may be brought up to Stravinsky and then come to Bach or Wagner—or it may be the other way round. There is a time for Shakespeare, Jane Austen or *Alice in Wonderland*. But as the make-up of each of us is different so also is the moment. To many people Martha Graham's visit to London came at their psychological moment, to others it did not—but it will.

Graham's contribution to the art of dance is immense, let there be no doubt about that in the minds of anyone. After a long career in which she has struggled to crystallize her own beliefs—and triumphed magnificently—she comes to London and puts on a new work. Even those of us who are now her ardent disciples did not expect more than a beautiful reiteration of her earlier works in *Ardent Song*. How very wrong it is to ever pre-suppose anything! In this new work, she bubbled out with new ideas, new influences, new lighting, new use of scenery and a new lyrical approach. All this from a woman who must be around three score years (not that age has anything to do with it).

In her dressing room after the last night of the season, a night that will long be remembered for the warmth and affection shown by the British public to this great person, Graham made a most illuminating statement, "America is washed on both sides by oceans —one making direct contact with the west and one with the east. This is possibly why in America we have a sympathy for both civilisations." Water is the greatest conductor and this is possibly the reason why *Ardent Song* has an unmistakable affinity with oriental dancing. Many of the movements were reminiscent of Kathakali and Manipuri together with the lyrical purity of dances from the Indonesian islands. Graham had wedded these influences to her own vocabulary thus enriching it. Possibly part of the secret of her greatness is that there is no form of movement beneath her consideration. She has not stuck in the rut which has bogged so many "movements."

We should like to think that the ocean which washes America from the west will also wash the other way and bear Graham back to us very soon. Her influence is badly needed.

May 1954 Vol. 5 No. 5

Dance and Dancers

Editor: PETER WILLIAMS
Assistant Editor: CLIVE BARNES

WORLD'S LARGEST NET SALE IN THE FIELD

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The way to the stars

"WE have no stars in the company as all our principal dancers have equal status. They are, in fact, all stars." This has been the proud boast of many a company in the past twenty years. Proud the boast may be, but is it not really a pride that is trying to obscure the fact that, with a few exceptions, the stars are just not there?

The Pavlova film recently shown by the London Ballet Circle, shortly to be shown to a wider public by the British Film Institute at the National Film Theatre (see Ballet Dates), revealed that star quality is a thing most sadly lacking today. There has been quite a to-do about these films damaging the name of Pavlova. Having seen them I can now say with confidence that not only do they enhance her name but also open up a new vista of thought about the present unsatisfactory attitude towards stellar luminaries.

The film opens on a tiny fragment from *Christmas* and there, without her even moving from a sofa, is a great, great star. To some it may, perhaps, seem rather corny. But how wonderful to see corn on such a scale! The movement of her head and arms, the way she lived the moment according to the role's demands—all proclaimed her supremacy. In the other excerpts in the film, although it was taken only four years before her death and she was already a tired woman, this supremacy is evident in so many ways. There need be no more doubts about her; in the same way that just to see Karsavina move in a class room is enough to convince everyone that she was a star.

Today's stars of the dance could be named on the fingers of pitifully few hands. In Britain we have two—Markova and Fonteyn. To watch Markova doing anything is to be conscious of what the word really means. Fonteyn is the only person who can be guaranteed to fill Covent Garden or anywhere else she cares to dance. But when the time comes, who is there to take their place? Unfortunately today's dancers have been brought up almost to despise the word.

The way to the stars is lonely. It is only achieved by a burning from within, a nobility of mind, a singleness of purpose, a consciousness of the meaning of the word and intense hard work until the end. It is a hard, frequently tragic, path. The sole reward being the knowledge that your art has been enriched and that thousands of people have been given pleasure.

Before it is too late let us realise that ballet can only survive on its stars. There will never be a company great enough to do without them.

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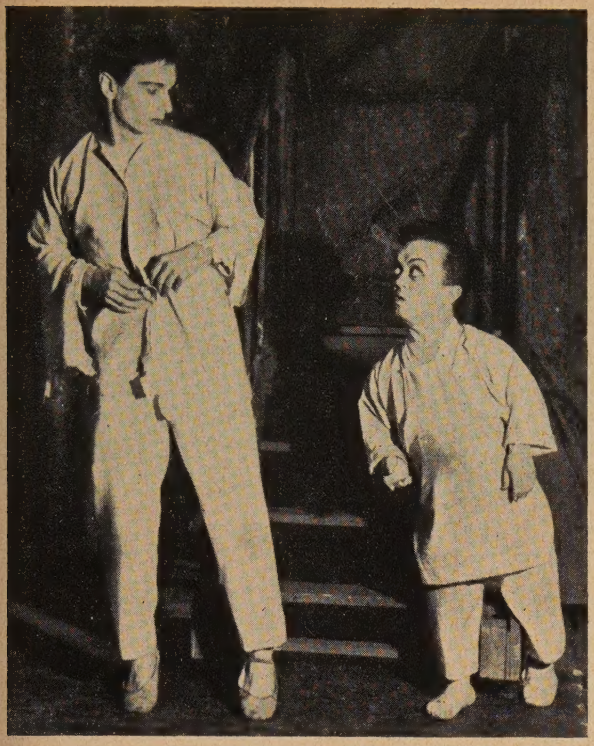


Peter van Dijk

The first night of Ballets de France de Janine Charrat, at Stoll Theatre, revealed a company of fine dancers but quite outstanding was the 22-year-old German male dancer who was making his English debut.

It is early yet to predict whether he will become the world's outstanding male dancer but at the moment he seems to combine the best qualities of Skibine, Babilée and Golovine. He is expressive in all he does and has technical perfection.

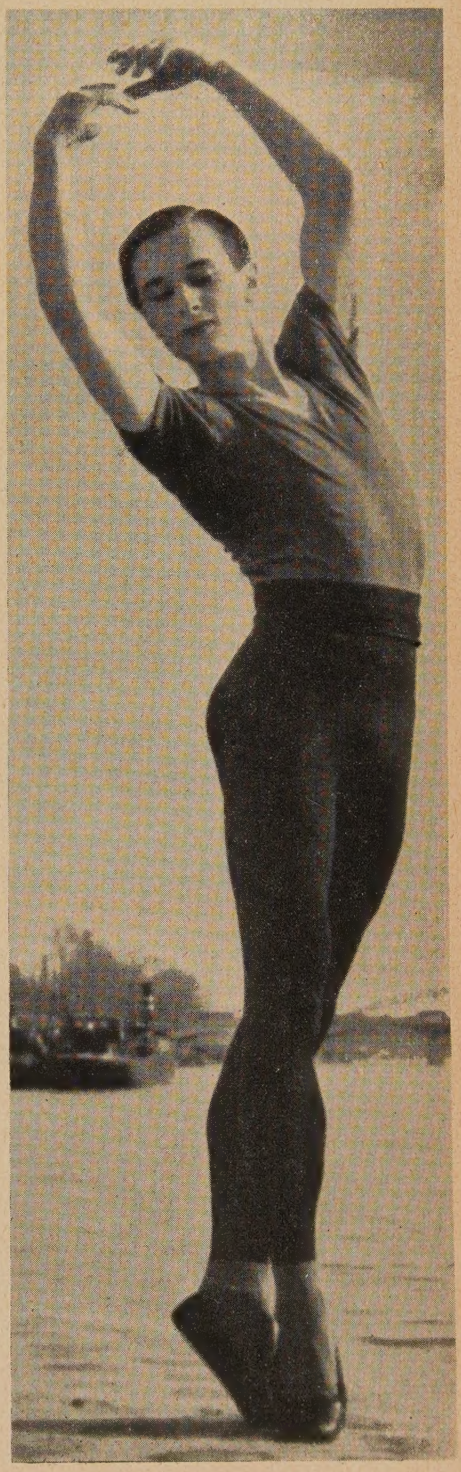
by

MARIE-FRANÇOISE CHRISTOUT

Left: With the dwarf in Les Algues. *This moving and original ballet based on an idea, and designed by, Castelli with choreography by Janine Charrat was one of the most original works that London has seen for some time. It would hardly be thought that a mad-house could make a suitable background for ballet, yet the work had great power without resorting to the unpleasant. The sensitive playing of Charrat and van Dijk contributed considerably to the ballet's impact.*

Right: Peter van Dijk against the Seine.

Photos: Lido



BREMEN-born Peter van Dijk was destined to become a dancer from his childhood by his mother, a victim of middle-class prejudice, who had vainly wished to become a ballerina.

In Berlin, to realise his mother's dream he attended at the same time school and a studio where he learnt the rudiments of what seemed to him a new game. In 1940 he became the pupil of Tatiana Gsovsky who quickly recognised his gifts, developed them, and from then on assumed a great influence over him.

Ballet Mistress of the Berlin Staatsoper, she engaged him in 1946 as a soloist, thus short-circuiting the usual period in the *corps de ballet*. For four years, he gathered stage experience in both classical and modern works, playing in succession the Blue Bird (from *Sleeping Beauty*), the Can-can Dancer (in *La Boutique Fantasque*) and Mercutio (in *Romeo and Juliet*).

In 1950, on Tatiana Gsovsky's departure, he left the Staatsoper for the Municipal Opera House in the British sector of Berlin, where he appeared in *L'Oiseau de Feu* and the dances from *Prince Igor*.

He made his debut as a choreographer on the stage of the Tribuene, arranging Stravinsky's *L'Histoire du Soldat*. The work was of sufficient interest to earn the offer of the double post of Maitre de Ballet and Premier Danseur at the Weisbaden Opera House.

His own company

In 1951 then, the young dancer left Berlin and formed his own company with the best pupils of Tatiana Gsovsky. With them he staged two *avant-garde* works—*Evocation d'Apollon* to a dodecaphonic symphony by Henze, and a *pas de trois* to music by Klebe—and called in the aid of young designers to enhance the colouring of the scores.

His taste for romanticism, however, pressed him to arrange, and dance to, a youthful work of Schönberg—a *Pelléas et Mélisande* which was full of poetry and lyricism.

Van Dijk surmounted the difficulties caused by a change in the management of the Wiesbaden Opera House by joining Janine Charrat, in May 1952. With her, his international career then began.

He danced in *Concierto* (Grieg), *Geste pour un génie* and the well-known classics—Gsovsky's *Pas Classique* to Auber music and the Minkus *Don Quichotte pas de deux*. He travelled across Europe from Jugoslavia to Portugal. Paris discovered him in March, 1953, under two complementary aspects.

In *Le Cygne Noir*, his youthful mastery placed him on a level with the best contemporary dancers. His pure technique being accompanied by a natural elevation. *Les Algues*, on the other hand, brought out the real dramatic powers and an undeniable stage presence which is one of the principal attractions of this particular work. Finally a slight and hastily staged work, *Esquisses*, revealed a certain inventive talent.

Fusion of music and movement

Deeply classical in temperament, Peter van Dijk has been formed in the Russian school—as much by Tatiana Gsovsky as, since 1952, by Boris Kniasev. For him the dance is a harmonious fusion of music and beauty of movement.

Greatly attracted by music, he scorns danceable but sugary scores and admires in particular Tchaikovsky, then Prokofiev and Sauguet, whose score for *Les Forains* holds great appeal for him.

He has little interest in free expression. To his respect for classical works such as *Giselle* and *Le Lac des Cygnes*, he brings a very modern creative taste, which, nevertheless, he looks upon as always being subject to the laws of classical ballet. Thus he reconciles his romanticism, which causes him to consider *Romeo and Juliet* as his favourite ballet, with the choreographer's desire to renew himself in creation.

Let us hope that, both as dancer and choreographer, Peter van Dijk may soon have the opportunity of confirming the hopes that are held of him.

In Marie-Francoise Christout's article on Jean-Paul Andréani (March issue, page 12, col. 2, line 18), his mastery was described as "precarious." This should read "precocious."

The female Russian dance, Beryozka, *which was the first and most successful dance that the company gave and from which the company took its title.* *Photo: Y. Berliner*

Birch tree dancers

The first large group of Soviet dancers to appear in London (at the Stoll Theatre from April 28) is an all-woman dance ensemble widely acclaimed in Russia and in various parts of Europe.

by MIKAIL DOLGOPOLOV

Nadezhda Nadezhdina, previously a dancer at the Bolshoi Theatre, Moscow, who founded the Beryozka Group and is its principal choreographer. *Photo: Y. Berliner*

THE *Beryozka* (Birch) Dance Group is still very young. It was founded a mere six years ago by the talented choreographer and teacher, Nadezhda Nadezhdina, who until quite recently danced at the Moscow Bolshoi.

The *Beryozka* group was founded in 1948, when an all-Russian festival of rural amateur activities was held. Distinguished Soviet dancers and choreographers came from Moscow, Leningrad and other big cities to the collective farms to see the performance given by the amateur groups.

There are hundreds of thousands of dance circles in the Soviet Union. The best take part in regional and republican festivals, and then the most interesting groups and most talented soloists are chosen for the U.S.S.R. Festivals held in Moscow.

At the regional festival in Kalinin, Nadezhdina saw many interesting Russian dances, both old and new, performed by individuals and small groups. But general attention was attracted by the group which performed the dance *Beryozka.*

Though not completely polished and containing too many repetitions and monotonous movements, this dance was imbued with so much freshness and charm that the jury recommended this collective farm group for the festival in Moscow.

Nadezhdina was authorised to enlarge the group by selecting the most capable women collective farmers from other dance groups in Kalinin Region. As she worked with them she enriched the dance.

Successful dance gives title

The circle was well received at the festival at the Bolshoi and Nadezhdina was entrusted with the organisation of a professional female dance group. The most talented girls from the amateur circles in the Kalinin Region were included, and young graduates of the Bolshoi's choreographic school and of other ballet schools, were invited to join.

From the beginning, the new group won great favour among the Muscovites. *Beryozka* —the name of its first and most successful dance—became the official title of the group.

Nadezhdina collected and studied the wealth of Russian female folk dances. Her adaptations carefully preserve the original pattern of the folk dance and its movements, while enriching their composition.

Exceptional success has been scored by the group's performance of an old Russian reel, *Lebedushka* (The Swan). Also popular are *Northern Reel* and *Tsepochka* (Chain).

The group also perform contemporary Russian collective-farm village dances. There is sparkling merriment in the female *Cossack Dance* and in the *Girls' Dance.*

An interesting dance is the *Prokhodka* (Festival). It is a miniature work about a village Don Juan, the collective-farm accordion player.

Humour and imagination

There is much unaffected merriment in another collective-farm dance, the *Metelitsa* (Blizzard). Nadezhdina has invested much of her resourcefulness and imagination into this dance scene of the girls who make merry on the snow-covered square.

New dances succeed one upon another: there is the original dance, *Troika* and *Karusel,* which reproduces the scene at a Russian fair with a merry-go-round, the *Topotukha* and *Comic Polka.*

The programmes of the Beryozka group usually conclude with a ballet based on the

The dancers in Lebedushka (*Swan*). *Photo: Y. Berliner*

Above: The company in a lively Russian dance.
Right: The company in the Northern Reel, *one of the many regional dances which will probably be quite new to a British audience.*
Photos: Y. Berliner

Soviet Youth Dance. The music for it was written by Anatoly Novikov, composer of the Democratic Youth Song.

To the accompaniment of three accordions, girls clad in white and with bouquets of scarlet flowers in their hands, come on to the stage with a ringing, merry song. It seems as if we witness a scene from one of the youth festivals. Enthusiastic applause come up from the hall as the happy Soviet youth enters and leaves the stage.

The *Beryozka* group took part in the World Youth Festival in Budapest, where it received a prize. It has performed with invariable success in many countries of Europe.

THE Moscow State Dancers Beryozka, as the group is called today, consists of fifty dancers and musicians of which the Beryozka Group forms the main part. Accordions and balalaikas are used extensively in the performance. The dancers are all students of the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow.

There are one or two points which need clearing up in the minds of the public. Firstly the fact that the mention of the Bolshoi Theatre immediately brings to mind a large classical company—which this is not. Secondly, Mikail Dolgopolov's above article might possibly give the impression that the group is devoted solely to folk dance—which it is not.

The Moscow State Dancers are a group whose numbers are based on traditional and folk dances which makes them an ensemble quite different from anything seen before in England.

The folk dance influence has always been very strong in Russian Ballet and one only has to think of *Petrouchka, Prince Igor* or *Thamar* to realise exactly how strong this influence is. We hope the presence of this new group, which will show us many things we have never seen before, will inspire our own choreographers at the same time.

Carzou designs Giselle

BELOW are the designs by Carzou for the new production of *Giselle,* which is shortly to be given at the Paris Opéra.

If any ballet really belongs to anyone then this belongs to the Opéra as much as the Petipa ballets belong to Maryinsky Theatre (now Kirov Theatre) in St. Petersburg (now Leningrad). The Opéra has the most right to attempt a new way of presenting the ballet which has become, with its unbroken tradition of a hundred and twelve years, the high pinnacle that every ballerina hopes to conquer. Even today, it is impossible to find such a perfect fusion of story, music and choreography.

The art of the designer was, in the days when the work was first produced, rather secondary to the other arts which went to make ballet, though it would be hard, one imagines, to improve on the original designs by Pierre Luc Charles Ciceri. However, the designing side is one that can be continually changed without harming the ballet as a whole.

Giselle is the essence of nineteenth century romanticism and Carzou is the essence of twentieth century romanticism, therefore the two should bridge the gap of a century. How successful this marriage will be is not easy to determine, but we welcome this attempt at injecting new blood into the old ballet, even if eventually it becomes necessary to return to something more parallel to the original production.

The new designs as shown here are incomplete as Giselle's grave has still to be added to Act II. In this act also will be all the tricks so beloved of the nineteenth century theatre—flying wilis and so on.

Carzou has proved in his designs for *Le Loup* (for Roland Petit's Ballets de Paris) that he can create the most beautiful stage forest we are ever likely to see. Whether this same arboreal treatment is going to be so successful for *Giselle* remains to be seen, but as one of the most important decorators of today, it is only right that he should be given this ballet to design.

P.W.

Carzou's first act for Giselle.

Carzou's second act for Giselle.
Photos: Marc Vaux

Out of the Maze

Last month, Clive Barnes and Peter Williams started on an errand of discovery into the maze of Martha Graham's creation. Here are their impressions of a remarkable repertoire and dance experience.

Graham as the Wife and Bertram Ross as the Revivalist in Appalachian Spring.

Appalachian Spring

APPALACHIAN SPRING is Graham's song of the earth. It is the quiet contentment of a married couple in each other and in their surroundings; it is the gentle pride of man in the things he has created and his hopes for further creation; it is the eternal wonder at the beauty of re-creation which is spring.

The work has an "evening" tranquillity. The characters file in slowly as if they had a rendezvous. The married couple dance and in their dance we realise their joy and hopes. The Pioneering Woman reveals her fervent love of the land and its promise. The Revivalist preaches of the fire and brimstone that will descend upon the wicked, his followers testify their faith. The Husbandman and his wife are left to reflect on the blessings the Lord has bestowed on them while the rest file slowly out.

There is no story in the accepted sense and yet it is a universal story. It is so lightly sketched-in that it is easy to overlook much of what it has to say. There is a wealth of meaning in the simplest movement or gesture.

For instance, all the love and pride of creation is conveyed in the way that the Husbandman (Stuart Hodes) touches the house he built with his own hands. The Pioneering Woman (Matt Turney) stands as though she sees a great future in the vast open prairie. The Revivalist (Bertram Ross) moves stiffly as though burning up with his faith while his followers dance as if bowed down by theirs. The Wife (Martha Graham) sits in the evening sun with a look so different from that of the Pioneering Woman—it is as though she sees the inevitability of life's cycle. There is a remarkable moment when the four principal characters face each other. In the way that each of them stands, in the position of their hands and heads, their whole character is revealed.

This is one of the least complex of Graham's works; the symbolism is easy to discover and needs no searching into the deep recesses of the mind. The choreography is direct and folk dance themes are beautifully woven into the tapestry of these simple people from the Appalachian Mountains.

Again Isamu Noguchi has designed a masterly setting of a half-built house in which each line of its skeletal construction becomes an integral part of the work as a whole—nothing is superfluous.

This is a work which has its place at the beginning or ending of any programme—it can lead the audience gently into the style of Graham or it can act as a soothing antidote after the storm and stress of one of the more tragic works, such as *Night Journey* (Jocasta and Oedipus). At one performance Graham's own role of The Wife was given with great distinction by Pearl Lang. **P.W.**

Canticle for Innocent Comedians

"THIS is a dance of joy, in praise of the world as it turns." It is a work about you, me and us—the Innocent Comedians and the world we live in. Miss Graham looks at Nature, finds it good, and sings about it. Her song is free and shapeless, a rhapsody to creation that shows a Whitmanesque side to the ever-surprising Graham personality.

Canticle shows the life-cycle of the world in simple unpretentious terms. It is as easy to understand as *Genesis*. A group of people gather together to praise the Sun, the Earth, Wind, Water, Fire, the Moon, the Stars, and Death. Death is birth and man continues in his praise. Each element is praised with an expressive dance, and the work is linked together by the dancing of the "Participants" which separate the episodes of praise by the "Celebrants."

This ritual is composed in dance invention of startling originality. The apt beauty of the dances for Sun and for Earth give to the onlooker an instant of perception; the conception of the young man falling in love with the moon contains an essence of lyric poetry; the welcome embrace of death and the subsequent re-birth has epic grandeur. But always it is the dancing that produces these effects. Anyone could have devised this hymn of praise, Graham makes it quick with dance. It draws breath from the sublime appositeness of her choreography.

Yet it is as an inventor of dance movement and image (the two are as one in her work) that she reigns supreme. She coins phrases hot-fresh from the mint, seldom repeating herself, she babbles magic words like an idiot-child or poet.

From the beginning Graham saw decor as being in the ballet rather than round it. In this work she carries her theories to the point at which the decor (a supremely anonymous set by Frederick Kiesler) plays an active part in the action of the ballet. It has become a member of the cast, its ever-varying planes and surfaces collaborating with the dancers who dance on, round and over this decor, their inanimate partner.

The work is one in which Miss Graham does not appear, but the athletic beauty of her dancers fills the work to perfection. Mary Hinkson, mysteriously lovely in praise of earth, that exceptional trio of male dancers Robert Cohan, Stuart Hodes and Bertram Ross, and all the others, make up a combination as strong as any we have seen.

Canticle is a wonderful theatrical experience, exciting and moving. **C.B.**

Deaths and Entrances

THE three "doom-eager" sisters who sit playing chess in an old house on a winter night in *Deaths and Entrances,* re-live childhood and past experience at the sight and touch of various objects. It is, as the programme says, "imagination kindled at antique fires." In the heart are invisible actors whose deaths and entrances of hopes, fears, memories, dreams and desires know no barriers of period or time.

It was probably rather confusing to even mention the name of the Brontë sisters in the programme note. There is, it is true, a slight similarity between the doom-eagerness of these sisters and that of the sisters of Haworth Parsonage, but there any resemblance ends. Graham's sisters have a greater affinity with Proust combined with characters in a Priestley "time" play.

We have all had the experience of touching some well-loved object and finding a host of memories—gay, amorous, tragic—flooding in on us. This is what Graham has tried to convey in terms of the dance, but she has seen it through the eyes of three New England ladies mouldering away their lives in a decrepit Colonial mansion. Through the re-enactment of past experience comes vision of the future.

The idea is good and the work gets the usual immaculate performance, but the dramatic impact suffers from nebulosity—sometimes the thread seems perfectly clear and then it eludes one. Many of the work's subtleties are clear only when seen from close range; as, for instance, the particular significance of the goblet and the shell.

It is better, perhaps, not to ponder too deeply on how the jig-saw fits together, but to sit back and watch how Graham can capture a mood. How the all-pervading sense of doom hangs over the proceedings like the sword of Damocles. How, by a few simple gestures, there is a feeling of timelessness.

The heart really belongs to only one of the three protagonists—to Graham. The other two are incidental in her life, not she in theirs. The two beloved—The Dark (Hodes) and the Poetic (Cohan)—are *her* experiences, though they become entangled in the lives of the other two. The three children, the sisters when young, are not dressed in any way to identify them with the sisters when old, which causes one to think that they are quite different children.

Nevertheless, like all Graham's work, it

must be seen again and again before complete understanding is reached. Unfortunately impossible in a few performances. **P.W.**

Letter to the World

LETTER TO THE WORLD, so the programme tells us, "is a drama about Emily Dickinson as a poet and as a woman of New England. The action takes place in the world of her imagination and of her poetry rather than in the day to day world of Amherst, Massachusetts, where she lived." A formidable task for a choreographer, the presentation of "The Life and Works of Emily Dickinson." Yet Miss Graham is successful; in the course of this startling theatre-piece she contrives to present some account of Miss Dickinson herself and an illuminating commentary on the poems.

The work is bound to suffer in this country, and this underlines its most grave limitation, by the audience being largely ignorant of the place in American letters held by the nineteenth century poetess Emily Dickinson.

Dickinson is a modern American poet in the sense that Gerard Manley Hopkins is a modern English poet (both were published posthumously and both anticipated literary trends) and her verse has a quality and flavour completely individual to itself. A most indifferent craftsman with a horrifying incapacity for poetic technique and a sentimental intellect that lent itself to whimsicality, her work is saved from banality and consequent oblivion by a visionary power and an aptness of metaphor. Obsessed by death and God, a peaceful death and a cosy God, both of her own invention, possessed of a sprightly sense of the ridiculous, linked in a Wordsworthian "oneness" with Nature, Dickinson's position as a primitive "metaphysical" with an innocent eye, is unassailable.

The dance-work is constructed around a brief anthology of Dickinson poems. Dickinson herself appears in the piece in two guises, as the "One who Dances" and the "One who Speaks." The recitation of the poems is blended effortlessly into the weaving of the work, so that its awkward composite structure is rarely noticeable. The work shows a progression through love and happiness to the tranquil sadness that mysteriously clouded the poetess's last years, but it also reveals, in dance terms, every facet of her poetic imagination.

The entire gamut of Dickinson's poetic experience has been transformed into dancing. Even the dance idiom employed runs closely parallel to Dickinson's poetic style; the conversational inconsequentiality of the poetess finds its expression in the work's sudden entrances and exits, and abrupt changes of mood. Even more important the fecundity of Dickinson's metaphors and arresting turns of phrases are exquisitely matched by Graham's dance images, those moments of dancing she gives that do themselves produce a seemingly limitless vista of possibilities to the watcher. **C.B.**

Dark Meadow

OF all the Graham dance-works shown in London *Dark Meadow* is perhaps the most uncompromising and "difficult." Two of the dominant strains in Graham's work, her respect for formality and her quest for significance, can, and occasionally do, lead to an almost abstract world of personal symbolism; a world to which only the artist, to adapt Rimbaud, has the key. For this reason the spectator must find much of her work easier to interpret subjectively than to analyse objectively. The notes below are more a personal impression than a considered criticism.

The programme informs us that "*Dark Meadow* is a re-enactment of the Mysteries which attend the eternal adventure of seeking." The four movements are sub-headed "Remembrance of the Ancestral Footsteps," "Terror of loss," "Ceaselessness of love," and "Recurring ecstasy of the flowering branch."

On the surface the work appears as a fertility rite; complete with Priest (He Who Summons), Priestess (She of the Ground), Initiates (They who Dance Together) and a Novice (One Who Seeks). Dedicated to Spring the Chosen Virgin celebrates her solitary ritual, fearful for the past and uneasy for the future, until initiated she stands alongside her fellows.

This is a work that exists on more than one plane of meaning. The ritualistic outline takes on a contemporary significance in its allegorical implications. Here it can be read as signifying the individual's quest for enlightenment, or as showing the emotional changes that overtake the virgin on matrimony.

The meaning is dark, obscured and shadowed by the welter of personal symbolism with which it is overlaid. One recognises a dance with a piece of material, that looks for all the world like stair-carpet, as representing the primitive fear-wish to return to the womb; the sudden "flowering" of the ingenious decorative feature obviously indicates the advent of Spring, but for every clue picked up, many more are lost.

"Dear March, come in." Robert Cohan as March in Letter to the World.

Dark Meadow shows a weakness to Graham's high-serious approach to dance creation. The very ambiguity that gives the dance its peculiar quality of poetic insight, makes it a sitting target for symbolic extravagance. The work of the artist is to illuminate, not to mystify.

But even when obscure Miss Graham is usually beautiful, and *Dark Meadow* is no exception. Some of the group dances in particular have in them a choreographic expression of joy in movement that it would be difficult to equal in her work.

For the sake of variety it would be almost refreshing to say that either the Noguchi set, the Gilfond costumes or the music (by Carlos Chavez) were out of keeping with the work, but, of course, as anyone who has ever seen a Graham programme can tell you, they were not. Nor was the performance one whit less than excellent. **C.B.**

Yuriko in the "Cry of Aphrodite" from Moon Rise in Ardent Song. *Photos: Paul Wilson*

Ardent Song

IF *Appalachian Spring* is Graham's song of the earth, then *Ardent Song* (which had its world premiere at the Saville Theatre on March 18, 1954) is her moon song. Based on two quotations from *Winds* by St. John Perse, the works falls into three moon phases—rise, high and set—sandwiched between Nightfall and Dawn.

". . . and we have so little time to be born to this instant . . . The cry! the piercing cry of the god upon us!" The opening salutation sees the company grouped on the ground performing movements seemingly inspired by Balinese dances. This episode has the symmetry of a ritual. The red cloaked figure dominating the scene opens out to reveal Aphrodite (Yuriko), whose dance with a conch shell symbolises all the eroticism of moon rise. She is borne away in a barque, realised by the simple use of a piece of material. Moon High (Lament) is represented by three girls (Turney, Margolies and Hinkson), with an enigmatic sphinx-like quality. The setting moon, Helen McGhee, is a Minoan goddess with attendant snakes, whose serpentine coils encircle her arms. Pearl Lang floats down on a moonbeam and dawn breaks—"O you, whom the storm refreshes . . . Freshness and promise of freshness"—and the stage opens out to a new day with its rays of refracted light and promise.

Even if the symbolic significance of the different phases cannot be understood, the beauty of movements and the wonderful use of lighting and simple props was a revelation and the crowning achievement of Graham's season. **P.W.**

Choreographers for Ballet Comique

Photographed by Peter Grugeon

Deryk Mendel shows Michel de Lutry a movement from his work, Junior Clerk.

Jack Carter showing a movement from Shadows of the Past.

Michel de Lutry, who has done the choreography for Le Cid, *with his wife Domini Callaghan, also a principal dancer in the company.*

WHATEVER the outcome may be, we applaud Ballet Comique for having the courage to employ young choreographers for the main bulk of their repertoire.

So often when a new company is formed, the first instinct of the direction is to play safe. How familiar we have become with the old standard repertory of classics trotted out by company after company. Not that we have any objection to Petipa and Fokine, the usual stand-bys, but if we are never going to have anything more than 19th and early 20th century classics, then ballet is bound to stagnate. New blood has got to be injected into any art if it is to live at all.

Of the four choreographers shown here, two will be familiar to readers through Ballet Workshop—Jack Carter and Peter Darrell. Carter has created works for several companies—Continental Ballet, London Theatre Ballet, Ambassador Ballet. His *Ouverture* (first given by Ballet Workshop) based on Marcel Proust, is now in the repertoire of Ballet Rambert.

Darrell, previously a member of Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet, has created works for Workshop (the best being *Les Chimeres*), for Festival Ballet and appeared with great success in cabaret.

It is as dancers that most people know Deryk Mendel and Michel de Lutry. Mendel was originally a member of Sadler's Wells Ballet; later he was, for many years, with Les Ballets des Champs-Elysées. Recently he has created works for French television. De Lutry was with International Ballet and Metropolitan Ballet and is well known for his appearances on television. He has done choreography for films and also for television.

Peter Darrell at work on Fountain

—which the company are seen rehearsing.

Franca in Minneapolis

The two principal Canadian companies—The Canadian National Ballet and the Royal Winnipeg Ballet—have recently made successful tours of the U.S.A. This is an account of the National Ballet during its stay in Minneapolis by a famous English teacher now working in that city.

by ALEX MARTIN

Celia Franca as Giselle and Jury Gotshalks as Albrecht in Giselle *act* 1. *Photo: Ken Bell*

THERE is no pleasure as great as the unexpected pleasure. Sitting in the theatre here on the first night I could not but wonder what I was going to see, and how much, if at all, I was going to enjoy it. *Giselle* was billed as the opening ballet. How could a three-year-old company, accompanied by only two pianos, even with Celia Franca—an artist I have always admired, but could not imagine as a completely ideal Giselle—how could they successfully acquit themselves of such a difficult task?

With the overture began that unexpected pleasure. The two pianos, sensitively played by June McBride and George Crum, the musical director, began the simple melodies of the overture, the curtain rose on Kay Ambrose's charming rustic set, Giselle entered in the person of Celia Franca, and one of the most enchanting performances of this ballet was under way.

Franca's restrained and simple playing in the first act, coupled with her light and elegant elevation, with David Adams as a noble Albrecht, and a *corps de ballet* notable for its unity and freshness, all combined to make a notable performance of the first act.

But it was perhaps in the more difficult second act that the company showed to the best advantage. Lois Smith was a regal cruel Queen of the Wilis, giving the role much more characterisation than is usual, and the Wilis were well disciplined without having a drilled quality. David Adams danced with great brilliance, but all were eclipsed by Franca in this act.

Her dancing had a disembodied quality which was very reminiscent of Markova's without having a "copied" feeling. It seemed to be so utterly natural to her, one could not imagine her dancing in any other manner. For all concerned it was a triumph.

The programme closed with *Gala Performance,* revived and slightly revised by Tudor. I frankly do not care for this ballet now. When first produced it would seem to have been arranged by someone who was vaguely amused by the conventions of the classical ballet of the nineties. The latest version would appear to be the product of someone who has a wholehearted detestation of all ballet. There is an element of hatred and spite in the choreography, which is a trifle disconcerting. I must admit that it was danced with great verve and zest, and in a *soignée* style by a company whose average age is only twenty, which I feel is a remarkable achievement. Lois Smith as the Italian ballerina was once again noticeable for her aristocratic style and effortless characterisation. Angela Leigh tackled the appalling difficulties of the variations arranged for the Russian Ballerina with great success.

The following night the programme consisted of the third act of *Casse Noisette,* with a rather pink set by Kay Ambrose, and the various *soli* more than adequately danced by various members of the company, the leading roles being danced by Jury Gotshalks and Irene Alpine, who has brilliant and effortless supported turns. This was followed by *Lilac Garden,* with a fine set and costumes by Kay Ambrose, though I feel Stevenson's costumes will never be bettered. Though on a large stage, I felt all the emotional impact that a performance at the Mercury used to give. Lois Smith has much of the statuesque beauty of Maude Lloyd in the role of Caroline; Franca's performance as The Woman in his Past is too well-known to receive superfluous praise from me.

The peasant *pas de deux* from *Giselle* followed, with Lois Smith and David Adams, cleanly danced with a delightful 'olde worlde' characterisation, and not as a crash-bang circus act. The programme closed with a not very successful *Prince Igor,* with the dancers working like blacks to compensate for the lack of sound, and failing gallantly.

The final programme given was Act II of *Swan Lake,* with Lois Smith as Odette. What a wonderful dancer she already is, and in a few years time she will possibly be an internationally known ballerina. There are surely not many dancers who at the age of twenty-one, and after only three years in a ballet company, could perform the roles of Queen of the Wilis, Swan Queen, Caroline and *Gala Performance* with equal success.

Swan Lake was followed by *Dark of the Moon,* with music by Louis Applebaum and choreography by Joey Harris. The scenario is a rough transcript of the play of the same name, and is very successful as a piece of theatre, though in patches a little weak choreographically, and the programme closed with a repeat performance of *Casse Noisette.*

This company is at the moment not perfect, but its only outstanding imperfections are those which will automatically iron themselves out in time—a roughness and immaturity which will rapidly become a polish.

Next month's instalment of *The Canadian Ballet Steps Out* **will be about the Royal Winnipeg Ballet.**

Two scenes from Joey Harris' Dark of the Moon. *The picture below shows Franca as Barbary Allen (left), Ray Moller as Marvin (on the ground) and David Adams as the Witch Boy. Right: Celia Franca and Ray Moller. Photos: Ken Bell*

THE LIFE AND DEATH OF LOLA MONTEZ

First given by Ballet Workshop at the Mercury Theatre on March 14, 1954. Choreography, Jack Carter. Music, Verdi. Decor and costumes, Norman McDowell.

Cast

Lola Montez	ANNE LASCELLES
Her Mother	ANNA LENDRUM
Her Lovers	MICHEL DE LUTRY
Chorus	ANTONIA PALMER

Corps de ballet of Indian Maidens, Scottish Maidens, Demi-Mondaines, Dance Hall Maidens, Gendarmes, Conspirators, Gold Miners.

Scenes. 1, Lola in India—2, Lola in Scotland—3, Preparations for Paris—4, Lola in Paris—5, Intermission—6, Bavarian Interlude—7, Lola in the Golden West.

Photographed by Paul Wilson

Above: Lola's success in Paris is somewhat marred by the presence of other courtesans.

The Dance Hall Maidens (Mary Duchesne, Brigette Kelly, Peggy Watson and June Wood) in the final scene in California.

Lola with the Emperor Ludwig of Bavaria (Michel de Lutry).

Anne Lascelles as Lola Montez

WHEN the infant Marie Dolores Eliza Rosanna Gilbert was born in Limerick few could have foreseen that one hundred and thirty-six years later Jack Carter would base a ballet on her far from uneventful life. Lola Montez, to give that lady the name she made famous, was an immense personality in an age of immense personalities.

After a childhood spent largely in India she made her debut as a dancer in London in 1842, and subsequently careered around Europe like a fire-cracker. The summit of her life came when, as mistress of Ludwig I of Bavaria, she was created Countess of Landsfield.

Jack Carter considered the inspired possibility of a ballet on Lola some two years ago, and his original plan was for a full-scale production mounted on a large company. These circumstances not being forthcoming he has decided, rather than shelve the idea, to present a modified version under the auspices of Ballet Workshop.

He has devised his ballet as a series of episodes strung together by the device of a mute "chorus"—a girl sitting on the side of the stage, who negligently puts up, in the trusted manner of the music-hall, a card showing the name of the episode. The episodes themselves illustrate the highlights of Lola's lurid life; her childhood in India, her first flirtation in Scotland, her sensational debut in Paris, her romantic interlude with Bavaria's Ludwig, and her tragi-comic finale in America.

The form of the work is given unity by a marked structural similarity in most of the episodes (the Bavarian is the exception) and the introduction into each scene of a lover who, being portrayed in each instance by the same dancer, bears a strong family likeness to his predecessors and successors in Mlle. Montez' affections. The linking "chorus," although a good idea, is perhaps insufficiently developed; her apparent boredom at what is going on is all too dangerously infectious.

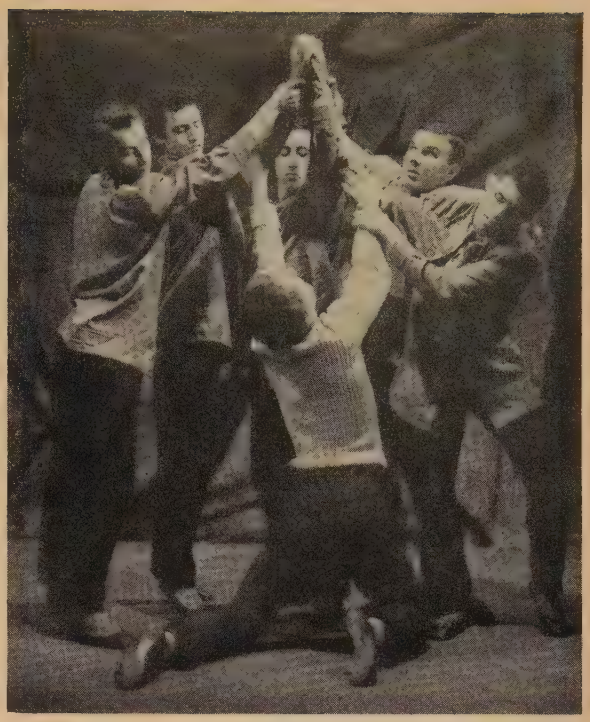
Carter's early reputation as a choreographer was almost exclusively based on his success with burlesques and comedies, but since then, with works like *Ouverture*, he has indicated that he is at his best when handling serious themes. The beginning of *Lola Montez* is excellent—the comedy pastiche of Indian dancing and the entrance of the lover has a measure of satirical humour that is not equalled by the rest of the ballet. Carter too often presents classical dancing of mediocre inventiveness which is neither amusing nor original.

The choice of music from Verdi is unfortunate and tasteless. It is not pleasant to hear well-loved passages from, for example, *Ballo in Maschera* trundled out on a piano with an occasional toot from a trumpet; when this is served up as an accompaniment to a trite *pas de deux* for lovers and a crouching parade for conspirators it wounds even the hardy musical susceptibilities of a ballet critic.

Norman McDowell's decor and costumes, in some ways the most satisfactory features of the production, were ingenious and colourful. He is becoming a designer of some distinction who should be given the opportunity of working for professional companies.

The work was given an enthusiastic performance by its large cast. Anne Lascelles, as Lola, had the finest opportunity of her career and gave vigorous conviction to her role. Michel de Lutry maintained the Jupiter-like metamorphoses of his part as the Lovers with good humour, and Mary Duchesne, Brigette Kelly, Peggy Watson, June Wood, Antonia Palmer, Rachael Cameron, Norman McDowell and Denys Palmer all danced well. Anna Lendrum's portrayal of Lola's Mother remained sketchy, for which some of the blame can be laid at the door of the choreographer.

Clive Barnes



Murder most foul. A gang of young thugs have just murdered an innocent young man who was out in the park with his girl friend. A senseless crime, alas, only too typical of many irresponsible youths of today.
Right: Ray Poynter, Alexis Cohar, Henry Haythorne, Gilbert Brunet and Barrie Irwin attack their victim—Denys Palmer. Photos: Paul Wilson

COMMON GROUND

First given by Ballet Workshop at the Mercury Theatre on March 14, 1953. Choreography, Michael Holmes. Music, Michael Hobson. Decor and costumes, Peter Sager.

Cast
DOMINI CALLAGHAN, DENYS PALMER
HENRY HAYTHORNE, BARRIE IRWIN, GILBERT BRUNET, RAY POYNTER, ALEXIS GOHAR, MARJORIE WOODHAMS, JEANNE LUSBY

Trumpet, Denis Egan Harp, Elena Polonska. Pianos, Michael Hobson and Ian Stirling. Percussion, Patricia Brady.

IF Lizzie Borden and her intrepid axe once made a suitable subject for ballet, why not the recent Clapham Common murder? So presumably thought Mr. Michael Holmes and he accordingly based his latest ballet, *Common Ground*, on a crime that even moved this nation's sluggish conscience. Juvenile delinquency is a subject which the publicity posters usually call "adult," and normally rates an "X" Certificate at cinema box-offices; it is as topical as newspaper headlines, but needs to be handled with care if it is to prove any less ephemeral.

Holmes' ballet is in three parts. It opens with a descriptive group dance for some spiv-like youths and their girl friends. The street-scene changes to a park, where two young lovers are molested by the youths. During the ensuing fight the boy is first beaten up and finally killed by the gang. The last section of the work concerns the efforts of the gang to disclaim responsibility and concludes with the corporate responsibility being unwillingly shouldered by one of the youths, who, terrified, is left alone with the corpse.

The criminal irresponsibility shown by gangs of young thugs is a social problem of the utmost importance, and the choreographer is to be congratulated on tackling such a theme. Unfortunately he permits himself no real comment on the situation he seeks to present; as a consequence his work is better likened to sensationalist journalism than to literature. The ballet concentrates entirely on the actual crime and only superficially sketches in the emotions of the participants. In no way is the crime related to its social background. That ballet can be used as a medium for sociological comment, and still be a moving utterance by an artist, has been proved by, among others, Jooss and Tudor.

Holmes' ballet misfires on two counts. In the first place he is like an evangelist without a message—which gives the work an after-taste of bathos; it promises so much more than it achieves. Secondly, although the initial group dance is well-handled, much of the choreography, the lovers' *pas de deux* for instance, and the beating-up so faithful to standard Gorbals practice, is conventional and unconvincing.

The decor and costumes by Peter Sager were rudimentary and added little to the impact of the work. In fairness it must be added that for a ballet designer no time is more difficult to portray than the present, no place more unrewarding than our own.

Michael Hobson's score on the other hand was extremely interesting, perhaps the most notable he has yet offered to ballet. In this the polite urbanity of his writing, always charming and often reminiscent of, say, Lennox Berkeley, was pierced through with emotions sterner than those of the salon. The subject appears to have inspired an emotional depth in the composer that hitherto was lacking.

Among the dancers, all of whom looked as depraved as one could wish, Henry Haythorne was outstanding as the scapegoat gangster. Here is a fine dancer who can perform that most difficult of feats, the miming of horror and terror. When one remembers that he is also an accomplished comedian, it seems strange that he is not a soloist with one of our leading companies.

Clive Barnes

SPEAK UP!

Where there is no Ballet-Club

SIR.—May we add one comment to Clive Barnes' excellent article on ballet-clubs, in your April issue ?

It often happens that a lover of ballet finds himself living in a town where there is no ballet-club, although unbeknown to him there may be several others in the same town who are interested in ballet and would be glad to meet someone who shares their enthusiasm.

The Association of Ballet Clubs has just instituted a scheme of Individual Membership whereby anyone over the age of 16 years may join the Association as an individual on payment of 5s. a year. The Association can put them in touch with other individual members in the same town or neighbourhood. This sometimes leads to the formation of a new club and it will, in any case, keep them in touch with the ballet-club movement through bulletins of the Association's activities, by invitations to the Association's functions in London and so forth.

Many people, often one-time members of clubs, have been very glad to join the scheme even in London.

The space which you are so kindly giving to the activities of Clubs has been of enormous value to our movement and we appreciate it very much.
G. B. L. WILSON (Chairman), CHRISTINE GREENFIELD (Secretary), *Association of Ballet Clubs*, 20 *Dean Road, London, N.W.2.*

Grant for International Ballet

I AM afraid that Andrew Browning, in answering my editorial in the March issue about the grant for International Ballet, has brought up a number of points which were not originally considered.

The point was not as to whether other companies were more worthy of aid (nobody will deny that Ballet Rambert are the most worthy of support of any existing British company), nor the fact that International have not produced a great number of important new works, nor anything to do with its artistic achievement or the quality of its ballerina.

The point was, but perhaps I failed to make it clear, that International Ballet in the many years of its existence had contributed something vitally important to the history of British ballet—namely the building-up of a vast new audience. Without that audience, it is doubtful whether any British companies would be in existence today. No audience, no ballet.

Anyone who, like myself, has had anything to do with the theatre in the provinces will know exactly what I mean when I say that of all companies it was International who seldom let them down.

A public was conditioned to appreciate the world's great classics which intrigued them enough to want to see the bigger and better productions at Covent Garden. It made them interested enough to want to go and see the more contemporary repertoires of other companies. In fact International made a vast new audience ballet-conscious. Frankly I think this to be no small achievement though admittedly the artistic standard might have been higher.

My great fear is that if a subsidy is refused to a company of this kind it may also, in the near future, be withdrawn from every other company. We are frequently told of the vast sums that are poured into productions of opera and I for one, who loved opera long before I loved ballet, have seen little that was worthy of the amount spent when it might have been spread over some struggling, but worthy, ballet company—*and* showed some return.—EDITOR.

On the way to the ball. La Capricciosa (left) meets the two clowns (right).

THE LADY AND THE FOOL

First given at the New Theatre, Oxford, on February 25, 1954. First London performance at Sadler's Wells Theatre on March 31. Book and choreography by John Cranko. Music by Verdi, arranged Charles Mackerras. Decor and costumes by Richard Beer.

Cast

Moondog	*two clowns*	KENNETH MACMILLAN
Bootface		JOHAAR MOSAVAL
La Capricciosa, a beauty		PATRICIA MILLER
Signor Midas	*her suitors*	DAVID GILL
Capitano Adoncino		PETER WRIGHT
The Prince of Arragonza		DAVID POOLE
Signora Scintillarda		DOREEN TEMPEST
Her Lovers		DONALD BRITTON, PIRMIN TRECU
Their Wives		PAULINE WADSWORTH, SARA NEIL

Corps de ballet of Guests:

Prologue—A Street. At Signora Scintillarda's. Epilogue—A Street.

Photographed by Denis de Marney

ON her way to a ball given by Signora Scintillarda, La Capricciosa, a famous beauty, is attracted to a pair of clowns—Moondog and Bootface. In spite of the antagonistic attitude of her three suitors, La Capricciosa invites the clowns to come to the ball.

At the ball, the usual intrigues are taking place. The hostess has two lovers, the presence of whose wives adds to the complication. The two clowns receive applause for their antics.

Capricciosa's suitors become insistent that she remove her mask. Her dance with each of them is concluded by the removal of a mask, but there is still always another underneath. Left alone she takes off the final mask, which reveals that she is only a young disillusioned girl. The clown, Moondog, discovers her, but she tries to hide her face from him. He falls in love with her.

Left alone, the second of the clowns—Bootface—tries to attract attention, but is ignored. The three suitors demand that Capricciosa makes her choice and the whole assembly sweeps off in a fury when she declares that it is Moondog she loves. They depart together, leaving Bootface disconsolate, but Moondog returns to beckon him on. Finally the three of them—for Capricciosa has now become a clown—are seen, weary but happy, sleeping on the seat where they first met.

CHOREOGRAPHY

THE Lady and the Fool gives another airing to the most frequently recurring theme in Cranko's work—love. In this latest ballet, which is not (we hope) intended as a comedy, he has sought to make a study, as Fokine did in *Carnaval*, in various types of love.

He contrasts the deep, physical love of the clown, Moondog, and the beauty, La Capricciosa, with the grandiloquent love of Capricciosa's suitors, the flirtatious love of Scintillarda's lovers, and the jealous love of these lovers' wives. But, says Mr. Cranko in effect, even the love of Capricciosa and Moondog is not disinterested, and for his example of perfect human love he presents the undemanding, spaniel-like devotion of little Bootface for his friend Moondog.

If the mere fact that a ballet had no very vital idea to disseminate distressed us, many good works would hardly 'scape whipping, so we may enter upon the question of how well *The Lady and the Fool* expressed its sentimental little theme, with a light heart and an easy conscience, as even a fine novel is sometimes no more than a well-written novelette. But unfortunately this particular novelette cannot be said to be, apart from a few magnificent purple patches, all that well-written.

The ballet's characterisation is weak. La Capricciosa is just another classical ballerina, this time with a penchant for appearing masked; her suitors are no more than half-brothers to those shadowy princes who woo the sixteen-year-old Princess Aurora. The clowns, themselves, although drawn with more care than the other characters, are still left a great deal to the imagination and acting ability of their interpreters.

The construction of the work, at first viewing, seemed careless and untidy. The ballet's central relationships between the two fools and the lady are nearly lost in a web of classical dancing, and the structure of the work (it has a Prologue and Epilogue both sticky with sentiment and stiff with mime, that are out of keeping with the style of the main body of the ballet) is as dull and as unappetising as a railway buffet sandwich.

Strangely enough much of the choreography (that for the *corps de ballet* definitely apart) is among the most interesting that Cranko has yet devised.

A grotesque and appealing *pas de deux* for the clowns that makes subtle use of the disparity in their heights; a delightfully surprising *grand adage* in three episodes and the two smoothly composed variations for Scintillarda's lovers, are all passages of choreography that deserve to be shining jewels in a fine ballet. But because of the general defects and blemishes these highlights do not add up to a satisfying work.

If much of the foregoing appears harsh criticism it must be remembered that Cranko is a major choreographer in what is probably a position more favourable, and certainly more sheltered, than any of his contemporaries at home or abroad. His work and future are national possessions that we hope will one day become a national pride. Earlier we compared *The Lady and the Fool* with *Carnaval* in theme. When Fokine created his ballet he was only a few years older than Cranko is now and considerably less experienced.

DANCING

UNLIKE the previous generation of British choreographers, Cranko has never really known the problem of creating a ballet on dancers of marked technical limitations. As a gratifying result of this he uses technique with rather more freedom than any of his predecessors, apart from Ashton. Cranko expects as a right an extremely high level of execution, and, of course, he gets it. Like Ashton, he is adept at assessing the individual capabilities of dancers and so bringing the best out of them.

Patricia Miller, whose recent improvement in classical work has been discernible in her Swanilda, gave a beautifullv poised performance as La Capricciosa, and she was flourishingly well supported by Gill, Wright and Poole, but the principal laurels went, where earlier had gone the most interesting roles, to Kenneth Macmillan and Johaar Mosaval as the two clowns.

These two provide an interesting contrast

Signora Scintillarda (centre) between her lovers while their wives appear disconcerted by the situation. Left to right: Wadsworth, Trecu, Tempest, Britton, Neil.

La Capricciosa (Miller) dances with her three suitors—Wright, Gill and Poole.

Left: Moondog (Macmillan) falls in love with the finally unmasked La Capricciosa (Miller).

Below: When the ball is at its height, the two clowns—Moondog and Bootface (Mosaval)—perform for the delight of the guests.

—Macmillan is essentially an "intelligent" dancer, while Mosaval is essentially an "instinctive" dancer. Macmillan's brains practically tick on stage as with careful brilliance he conveys his characterisation; little Mosaval, like Hamlet, "knows not seems," to say he becomes a character would be nearer the truth than to say he acts it. With Macmillan one thinks, "That's clever!", with Mosaval, "That's right!" Both are well served by the ballet and gave fine performances. Excellent dancing also came from Doreen Tempest, Britton and Trecu.

Clive Barnes

MUSIC

UNLIKE Charles Mackerras's skilful refurbishing of Sullivan material for *Pineapple Poll, The Lady and the Fool* contains very little of his own composition—only 12 bars of linking material in fact—the rest is all Verdi. But if it is Verdi that most of us have never heard before, that is because Mackerras has used mostly early Verdi operas never given in this country.

The sources of material are: No. 1: Prelude—*Alzira;* No. 2: Clowns and Ballerina—*I Lombardi, Alzira;* No. 3: Clowns' dance—*Sicilian Vespers;* No. 4: Tarantella—mostly *Il Finto Stanislao,* eight bars from *Aroldo* and *Luisa Miller;* No. 5: Ballerina's Dance—*I Due Foscari;* No. 6: Clowns' Divertissement with Rose—*Il Finto Stanislao, Aroldo;* No. 7: Stage Band Music—*Ernani;* No. 8: Grande Adage—*I Due Foscari, Ernani, I Masnadieri, Macbeth, Attila;* No. 9: Linking Scene—*Attila, Ernani, Sicilian Vespers, Alzira;* No. 10: Pas-de-cinq—*Il Finto Stanislao, I Lombardi, Don Carlos, Oberto, Attila;* No. 11: Pas-de-deux—*Sicilian Vespers, Aroldo, I Masnadieri;* No. 12: Finale—*Ernani, I Lombardi, Sicilian Vespers, Aroldo, I Lombardi;* No. 13: Epilogue—*I Lombardi, Luisa Miller, Aroldo.*

As might be expected, the score is a flow of glorious melody from start to finish. The various scraps have been chosen to provide exactly the right mood for every dance and wedded together with fine musical craftsmanship.

If the general effect sounds somewhat too sophisticated for early Verdi this is due to Mackerras's touches of scintillating orchestration and also because in many cases he has gone to the ballet music added by the composer for Paris productions of the respective operas.

David Hunt

DECOR

SELDOM can a ballet have opened, for the decorative point of view, so promisingly. Richard Beer's street front-cloth is delightful, as also are the costumes for the revellers on the way to the ball. La Capricciosa's ruffled cape and her pink hat have great *chic* and her be-caped suitors are opulent and right. The patched coats—one green, one red—of the two clowns give the whole scene a sombre richness.

Perhaps our hopes are raised too high, but the main scene—Signora Scintillarda's salon—is rather a let-down. I shall always believe that the designs for ballet should take on something of the mood and feeling of the composer, but this scene seemed to belong more to Offenbach or Lehár rather than Verdi.

The shape was good, this ornate salon with its balcony and wide Italian view, while the opalescent sky was beautiful, but the predominating pink of the decor and the roughly sketched-in architectural detail swamped the dancers. The lights in the lamp standards were far too bright and proved distracting. A pity, because many of the costumes were excellent.

The girls ranged from clouded yellow through to clouded green, while Miller's costume was a dull orange. Signora Scintillarda (Tempest) had a black costume with mauve in one of the under-skirts. One longed for a more satisfactory colour in the decor to show these costumes off. If any fault can be found with them it is that Miller does not stand out from the other characters.

The men were mostly in black except for the three suitors. Poole in oyster grey looked very handsome, and the cape he wears in the prologue had beautiful movement of which he made the best possible use. The other two suitors—one in magenta and the other in bright green—were far too strong and threw the colour scheme out of balance.

The lighting all through was not very satisfactory and a dance for the two clowns could hardly be seen at all.

Although the practice of discovering young designers from the vast ranks of the untried is wholly commendable, it is a debatable point if a choreographer of Cranko's standing should use somebody so totally inexperienced.

Peter Williams

curtain up!

Alicia Markova and Milorad Miskovitch in Nijinsky's first ballet—Prélude à l'Après-Midi d'un Faune—to Debussy's famous symphonic poem of the same name.

The two of them have been giving this work as a pas de deux *during their recent tour of the British provincial cities.*

Markova's idea in giving this work was to provide a contrast to the rest of the programme and so demonstrate the classical romantic (Les Sylphides), *the character classical dance* (Bolero 1830) *and the purely classical* (Casse-Noisette pas de deux). The Dying Swan *showed Fokine's evolution of the classical vocabulary, while Nijinsky's ballet showed the more modern trend of the dance.*

In this way, Markova showed a variety of styles and her own remarkable range.

Photo: Lido

Male addition to Wells babies

IT'S a boy—but by now everybody knows that Beryl Grey is the mother of a fine son. The new arrival seemed, in fact, to be the only topic of conversation at Covent Garden on the day he was born. The popular Sadler's Wells ballerina is the fifth member of the present Wells company to become a mother. The others are Pamela May, Julia Farron, Gerd Larsen and Avril Navarre. The company also boasts of having several fathers. Our company of ballet babies is now reaching vast dimensions.

Nobody dropped Fonteyn

WHO started the silly story, printed in several newspapers, about the unnamed young dancer alleged to have dropped Fonteyn during a performance of *Sleeping Beauty*? At least one version, although written to suggest that the columnist saw the incident, attributed it to a day upon which Fonteyn was not dancing.

Since the story has been reported so widely, there are two points which need to be made. First, that to repeat such a story, even if true, gives a misleading impression, especially if worded so as to imply incompetence on an occasion which may have been only an accident. This can do nothing but harm to the best interests of ballet.

Secondly—and far more important—it just was not true. Nobody *dropped* Fonteyn; you can all breathe again.

The power of the word of mouth

A QUITE remarkable proof of the value of personal recommendation was provided during the season of Martha Graham at the Saville Theatre. During the first week, largely because of many unfavourable notices, the audiences were poor. Some, even of those who came, were disappointed; others became fanatical admirers of Graham's experiments and achievements often after only one visit.

It was largely thanks to the enthusiasm and propaganda of this last group, that the audience began to increase towards the end of the second week and grew steadily from then on. Next time that Graham comes here she should find the nucleus of her audience ready made.

Other creators with Graham

MANY of the dancers in Graham's company are themselves choreographers. Pearl Lang, Helen McGehee, Linda Margolies, Stuart Hodes and others have all created solos or larger works. It is an open secret that Miss Graham hopes to return to London before long, so perhaps next time some enterprising person will give us the opportunity to see the works of the younger choreographers in the company? Even if, as is likely, they do not reach Graham's standard, they will considerably enrich our knowledge of the American modern dance world.

Phœnix Jooss

GOOD news for the admirers of Kurt Jooss. You will remember that he had to disband his company after the city of Essen withdrew their financial support. A blow which fell during the company's last season at Sadler's Wells.

Now it seems likely that another German town may give him support. If all goes well, a permanent home and a subsidy in Dusseldorf may permit him to re-form his dance group. Jooss is another of those figures in the world of the dance who inspire a sincere devotion in their followers; most of his former dancers will probably rejoin him.

Popular ballet subject

JACK CARTER'S production for Ballet Workshop is not the first ballet to portray the nineteenth century dancer, Lola Montez. Edward Caton produced a ballet called *Lola Montez* for Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo around 1948. The title role was played by Alexandra Danilova. The costumes and scenery by Raoul Pene du Bois, were those originally used for a ballet called *Ghost Town*, with choreography by Marc Platoff. Jenny Lind and Algernon Charles Swinburne were characters in the latter.

New way to the stars

ONCE upon a time it was considered that the best way to become a film star was to go to Hollywood and become a waitress or a film extra. Now all that has changed and it becomes more and more apparent that the ideal way is to come to England and become a ballet student!

Two of the many ex-dancer film stars have recently been in the news. Audrey Hepburn has been awarded a film "Oscar" and its American stage equivalent—a "Tony." The first for *Roman Holiday* and the second for the play *Ondine* on Broadway. It may surprise you to know that Audrey studied ballet in England.

It's bound to happen—That the Rake, in de Valois' *Rake's Progress*, will take off both wigs—the real wig and the bald wig—and reveal that there was no need for any wig.

Drawn by Peter Revitt

Nearer home, Maureen Swanson, formerly with the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet, has been picked for her biggest film part so far —as a dancer!

Another ex-dancer now a film star has announced that she will give up dancing for good. The reason given is that she did not want to go on, like some dancers, "until she was past it." No comment.

A year too late

WE have news for the dramatic critic who so naively suggested, when reviewing a production of Lorca's play, *Blood Wedding*, at the Arts Theatre, that the play would make a good subject for ballet. The comment was apt enough, but came, unfortunately, about a year too late. Even those outside the ballet world must know by now that Alfred Rodrigues created a work based on Lorca's play as the Coronation production for the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet last year.

Varying backgrounds for dancers in Joey

PAL JOEY, the famous American musical, which recently opened in London, features among its principals two dancers with very different backgrounds.

Harold Lang, playing the role of the cad hero, comes from classical ballet and will be remembered here for his performances during New York City Ballet's first London season. A former member of the company, he re-joined them just for the visit to this country and danced several leading roles, scoring a particular success in Balanchine's *Bourée Fantasque*. He has also starred in other Broadway hits, including *Kiss Me, Kate*! and was one of the original three sailors (with Robbins and Kriza) in *Fancy Free*.

Jean Brampton, the soubrette in *Pal Joey*, was for some time one of the liveliest of that very lively group of dancers—the Windmill Girls. She thus adds to the long line of stars to have emerged from Laura Henderson's famous little theatre near Piccadilly. Both she and Harold Lane should feel at home in Prince's Theatre, which has a long tradition of dancing of all kinds, from the Diaghilev company onwards.

Poole as choreographer

OPERA ballets provide a good opportunity for a young choreographer to gain experience. John Cranko, during his early days in England, must have arranged dances for more operas (ranging from Wagner to Britten) than he cares to remember. David Poole, who had his first chance with a revival of *Hansel and Gretel* last Christmas, has just staged the dances for the Sadler's Wells production of Bizet's *The Pearl Fishers*. There is every likelihood that his success in these two operas will result in an invitation to stage a more ambitious work.

New teacher in West Street

A NEW addition to that famous establishment of teachers—26 West Street—is a Swede who is a famous Modern dancer. Yat Malmgren may be remembered by many people in this country as a soloist with International Ballet. But it is as a modern dancer that he has really reached fame. He worked for several years in South America with Nini Theilade as dancer and choreographer. Much of his choreography is based on folk themes, especially Brazilian dances.

happy birthday to...

		May
Don Spottswood	American National Ballet Theatre	14
Ruth Ann Koesun	American National Ballet Theatre	15
Nicholas Beriosoff	London's Festival Ballet	16
Margaret Hill	Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet	16
Margot Fonteyn	Sadler's Wells Ballet	18
Peter White	London's Festival Ballet	19
Gilbert Vernon	Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet	21
Veronica Vail	Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet	22
Travis Kemp	Continental Ballet	23
Deryk Mendel		23
Tatiana Riabouchinska		23
Christian Foye	Opera, Nice	24
Ann Horn	Ballet Rambert	24
Cecil Bates	Walter Gore Ballet	26
Roma Duncan	London's Festival Ballet	29
Geoffrey Webb	*The Girl Friend*	31
		June
Rosemary Lindsay	Sadler's Wells Ballet	2
Molly Lake	Continental Ballet	3
Nathalie Krassovska	London's Festival Ballet	3
Robert Harro'd		4
Nina Vyroubova	Opera, Paris	4
Petrus Bosman	London's Festival Ballet	5
Diane Forhan	American National Ballet Theatre	5
Ninette de Valois	Sadler's Wells Organisation	6
George Zoritch		6
Patricia Ashworth	Ballet Rambert	8
Norman Dixon	Ballet Rambert	9
David Gill	Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet	9
Isabel Mirrow	American National Ballet Theatre	9
Nansi Clement	American National Ballet Theatre	10
Keith Beckett	London's Festival Ballet	11
Joanna Bowers	Ballet Rambert	11
Beryl Grey	Sadler's Wells Ballet	11
Greta Hamby	Sadler's Wells Ballet	11
Barbara Lloyd	American National Ballet Theatre	11
Rosemary Valaire	Sadler's Wells Ballet	11

As she was in La Fille Mal Gardée.

The return of Kschesinska

AMONG that vast and illustrious assembly of Russian emigrés who have enriched us with their memories, one voice has been conspicuously silent—that of Mathilde Kschesinska.

But what wonderful material for a novelist or film producer her life story would provide!

Mathilde Kschesinska was not only one of the greatest ballerinas of her age, but possibly the most brilliant star in the social firmament of St. Petersburg of her time. The great Pavlova herself could not compete with Kschesinska and had to leave Russia to seek her fortunes elsewhere, but Mathilde Kschesinska was guarded jealously by the Tsar as if she were some crown jewel. She was only driven from her St. Petersburg palace and Russia by Lenin, who wished to address the revolutionary mob from its balcony.

In her exile in Paris she has dedicated herself to perpetuating the great traditions of the Russian ballet and a whole pleiad of the finest dancers of this generation can look back gratefully to the incomparable training and encouragement that she has given them.

It is possible that her tale of grandeur and triumph may yet appear in print, as told by herself; for last year when she broke her leg, Madame Kschesinska, unable to be inactive, at last embarked upon writing her autobiography. This publication is eagerly awaited.

Now, happily recovered, the great ballerina, in her eighty-fourth year, is as full of zest and enthusiasm as ever.

A very active Patroness of the Federation of Russian Classical Ballet, she is again coming to London from May the 24th to the 31st, during which time she will preside over the Federation's fourth Congress and will give a daily class at the School of Russian Ballet in Chelsea. **V.K.**

NOTE.—Mathilde Kschesinska (Princess Krassinska-Romanovska), the daughter of a famous Polish character dancer, became ballerina at the Maryinsky Theatre, St. Petersburg, in 1895. She was one of the strongest technicians of her period and it was due to her that Russian dancers were put on an equal artistic footing with their foreign colleagues.

Her famous roles were in *Le Roi Candaule, Cinderella, La Sylphide, The Nutcracker, The Sleeping Beauty, Paquita, The Awakening of Flora, La Fille Mal Gardée The Daughter of Pharaoh, Esmeralda,* and *The Little Humpbacked Horse.*

She appeared during the first season of the Diaghilev company; her last appearance on the stage was in 1936 when she gave a Russian dance at a charity performance with Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo at Covent Garden.

Since 1917 she has lived in Paris where she has her own school.

She is Patroness of the Federation of Russian Classical Ballet, under whose auspices she is again coming to London. As one of the greatest ballerinas of her day, she has a great deal to offer to the rising generation.

As she is today. *Photo: Studio Iris*

Music for Graham

During the season of Martha Graham's company in London, a number of new scores were heard, several by composers whose work is little known in England.

by DAVID HUNT

THE musical scores for Martha Graham's dance dramas are invariably commissioned and worked out in close collaboration between choreographer and composer. The nine works given at the Saville Theatre suggest that Graham's primary musical need is an accompaniment capable of creating mood and atmosphere without distracting attention from the dancers. There is no attempt at "interpreting" music—the music is, along with the choreography itself, subservient to dramatic expression. And this, it would seem, is the essential difference between Martha Graham's approach and that of the classical ballet choreographer.

All of the music heard in London seemed to afford her ample scope without ever overreaching itself. It is not surprising then that, with the outstanding exception of *Appalachian Spring*, what we have been hearing would have little interest away from the theatre. All of the works showed a high degree of technical skill and, as might have been expected, reflected the powerful influence of Stravinsky, Hindemith, Copland and Bloch on contemporary American composers.

Copland's poignant *Appalachian Spring* has been heard here before, but in a later arrangement for a larger orchestra. This first hearing of the original scoring played by the company's usual group of fifteen players, increased one's admiration for the music's beauty, even if the freedom which the choreographer allows herself in regard to musical phrasing and rhythm did not make as much of Copland's inventiveness as some might have hoped for.

Norman Dello Joio, one time composer and musical director for Eugene Loring's Dance Players, is known here for a fine ballet score for Kidd's *On Stage*. His music for *Diversion of Angels* showed spontaneity of feeling and a compactness of form not evident in the majority of the other works.

A Texan in Paris

Thomas Ribbink, a young Texas composer who has studied with Milhaud in Paris, has written an imaginatively worked out set of variations for *Canticle for Innocent Comedians*, dwelling too long perhaps in minor modes for a paeon of praise, but always effective theatrically and giving wonderful opportunities to a choreographer. Long silent sections in the dance of the moon in which the undulating rhythm of the choreography gave the illusion of being part of the musical design showed how closely composer and choreographer had worked together.

Carlos Chavez has written ballet music in his native Mexico, incorporating melodies of Aztec Indians and employing native instruments. His score for *Dark Meadow* tried the unusual experiment of alternate sections scored solely for wind and strings respectively with extremely interesting if overprotracted results.

William Schuman's *Night Journey* supplied a thickly textured turgid accompaniment for the action, but did little to further his reputation in this country. That tension could be built up in lightness and clarity was demonstrated by Menotti's delightful use of percussive effects in *Errand into the Maze*, the only fault in which was that the charmingly lyrical theme that marked the entrance of the Minotaur was scarcely in character.

Hunter Johnson's scores for *Deaths and Entrances* and *Letter to the World* had flashes of originality, but these were largely submerged in the over-extended writing dictated by the needs of the drama. Most of the music presented during the season makes exacting demands on the players and these were well met in superb performances under Simon Sadoff, one time ballet conductor at the New York City Center.

Ardent Song

IN many of Graham's later works there are passages where the rhythmic pulse of the choreography opposes that of the music, not in any contrapuntal sense, but in bearing no relation to it. In *Ardent Song* (premiered during the London season) this tendency is carried to its logical conclusion. The composer, Alan Hovhannes, a 43-year-old American of Armenian extraction, who has studied under Frederick Converse and Bohuslav Martinu, has accepted his aesthetic subjugation magnificently.

Music can convey the impression of mystical experience in a variety of ways: by the chantings of Byzantium, by the chromatic persuasions of César Franck, or by the imaginative asperities of the Stravinsky of *Orpheus*.

The composer of *Ardent Song* has been relieved of most of the necessity by the hypnotice power of the choreography.

The score is, I am told, the result of intensive collaboration between composer and choreography. It makes use of strange whirrings, shimmerings and ploppings and all manner of things that go bump in the night.

As music it is sometimes insubstantial almost to the point of non-existence. Rhythm was for much of the time audibly supplied by the dancers themselves, except in the *Salutation* section, where a xylophone accompaniment to a sinuous melody not only exerted a compelling rhythmic fascination of its own, but the use of the pentatonic scale helped to establish the fact that the mysteries of the Aphrodite cult on which the work appeared to be based were of the Graeco-Oriental variety.

What there is of music in Hovhannes's contribution to *Ardent Song* is in an advanced, expressionist idiom and makes effective and colourful use of unusual combinations of the instruments at his disposal. For Martha Graham's purposes, the score, evocative and bristling with atmosphere, would seem to be ideal.

NEW RECORDS

Miller with passion and fire

The Three Cornered Hat. (Falla). L'Orchestre de l'Opéra Comique, Paris (Jean Martinon). Nixa ULP9034. 1 12in. LP, 36*s.* 5½*d.*

IN Decca's superb recording of *Tricorne*, reviewed in December, 1952, Ernest Ansermet's skilful and very sensitive handling of the long score avoids any danger of monotony which might result for those unfamiliar with the ballet. If that earlier performance could be enjoyed by the ballet-goer and general music lover alike, Jean Martinon's more straightforward approach will probably be preferred by those wanting a performance of the music as it is given in the theatre in association with Massine's choreography.

The Opéra Comique Orchestra plays with passion and fire if not with quite the polished refinement of the Suisse Romande team and the recording, although lacking the perfect clarity of the Decca, is pleasantly resonant, bright and full-toned.

The soprano solo and shouts of *olé* of the opening are recorded too close to the microphone to give the rightful impression, as is the case with the Decca, of coming from behind the curtain.

But a more important difference is Martinon's more gradual accelerando at the end of the miller's farucca. Ansermet's speed at this point robs the dance of its climax and is not even musically effective.

Each version then has much to recommend it and anyone wanting a recording should try to hear both before deciding.

Two American composers

Billy the Kid. (Copland); *Undertow.* (Schuman). Ballet Theatre Orch. (Joseph Levine). Capitol CTL7040. 1 12in. LP, 36*s.* 5½*d.*

AARON COPLAND and William Schuman are both composers who have attempted to create a personal idiom which would at the same time be unmistakably American. Schuman's music, in its more introvert soul-searching way, would seem to be inspired more by the neurotic impulses of life in the big cities, whereas the fresher lyricism of Copland's more extrovert musical philosophy has its roots deep in the folk traditions of the same pioneers we see in *Billy the Kid* advancing westward across the rolling prairies.

The respective scores for the ballets *Undertow* and *Billy the Kid* make very clear the differences in outlook and method of the two composers. The music in each case does exactly what is demanded of it: it is theatrically extremely effective, successfully underlining every dramatic point of the action and providing the choreographers, Tudor (*Undertow*) and Loring (*Billy*) with clear-cut rhythmic outlines.

More narrative in form than Copland's score for *Rodeo* of which the Ballet Theatre Orchestra have already given us a superb recording, the music for *Billy the Kid* needs the stage action to come fully to life. Yet if listening to it all again away from the theatre is a little disappointing, it is nevertheless interesting to discover to what great extent the ballet's successful evocation of the nostalgic loneliness of the Wild West is due to its music. And the tunefulness of the cowboy themes on which much of the score is based at least makes listening a pleasant experience—which is more than can be said for Schuman's turgid accompaniment for the psychological sex drama of *Undertow*.

In the theatre, Schuman's music assaults the senses with the force of a battering ram, but on a record this is fortunately much less possible. Those who want to be reminded of Ballet Theatre's productions of both ballets will be grateful for well recorded authentic performances.

This is as good a place as any to bring to the attention of readers a recent MP recording on LW5053 of five irresistible Joseph Strauss polkas written, of course, to be danced to, but never used for ballet, although they could well be. Played immediately after *Undertow*, these delightfully varied little pieces not only provide ideal light relief to Schuman's jarring cacophony but show it by contrast in all its decadent and pretentious triviality.

Famous pas de deux recorded

Don. Quichotte — Pas de deux. (Minkus); *Le Spectre de la Rose.* (Weber-Berlioz). New Symphony Orchestra (Anatole Fistoulari). Decca LW5084. 1 MP, 18*s.* ½*d.*

MANY readers have written to *Dance and Dancers* asking in vain for a recording of the *Don Quichotte pas de deux*. Now at last there is one.

Ludwig Minkus, born in Vienna in 1827, of Polish descent, so far as is known, spent most of his life in Russia, working both in St. Petersburg and Moscow as violinist, teacher and conductor, as well as composing the music for many full length ballets. For a time he was at the Paris Opéra where his collaboration with a young accompanist, Leo Délibes, resulted in the music for *La Source*, his own contribution, being so outclassed by his assistant's that Délibes was asked to write the music of *Coppélia* and Minkus returned to Russia.

Don Quichotte had its première at the Moscow Bolshoi Theatre in 1869 with Petipa choreography, and in a revised version at the Maryinsky two years later.

Although the ballet is still given in full in Russia, this wonderfully showy *pas de deux* is all we know of it here. Fistoulari gives every ounce of its bravura quality and if the ballerina's solo is taken at almost half the tempo as we usually hear it, the effect is so convincing musically to make one wonder whether the several choreograhic versions of this variation seen here in recent years are at all authentic.

On the reverse is a satisfying performance of Weber's *Invitation to the Waltz* in the Berlioz orchestration originally made specially as interpolated ballet music for *Der Frieschutz*.

D.H.

NEW BOOKS

The first British ballerina

My Dancing Days, by Phyllis Bedells (Phoenix House, 21s.).

WHO was the first British ballerina of this century? A case could be made out for Lydia Sokolova, Alicia Markova or even Margot Fonteyn, but the honour probably most truly belongs to Phyllis Bedells. Following in the footsteps of Adeline Genée and Lydia Kyasht, she reigned for a time as Queen of the Empire Ballet. She was also a leading light in the formation of such important movements in British ballet as the Camargo Society and the Royal Academy of Dancing. As such her memoirs, giving an account of her life up to her retirement from the stage in 1935, are unusually rewarding.

For one thing they give a clear picture of that by now almost mythical organisation, the Empire Ballet. It is more or less instinctive among the younger of us to think of ballet in England as dating from the first visit of the Diaghilev company, and to disregard, not only the immense interest in ballet that was felt during the nineteenth century, but also that much later flowering of the art at the Empire Theatre, Leicester Square. Miss Bedells describes that company and many of their productions with an affection that makes them live for the reader as never before.

Her career as a dancer ran parallel to the Diaghilev Ballet and Anna Pavlova's company. Although she had many points of contact with both she was never a member of either, and, as a consequence, the picture she presents of ballet in that period acts as a valuable supplement to what has already been written at length about the central ballet trends.

Her world of the Empire Ballet, and later of dance recitals and musicals, is a largely uncharted territory. Her accounts of her early days as a teacher and of the first struggles of the Royal Academy of Dancing to systemise dance training in this country, are also full of interest. Furthermore her careful eye for detail, and her habit of giving dates, names of committees and similar documentary material will make the book of some value to future dance historians of the period.

She is not a professional writer and at times her narrative is a little bald, but her subject-matter is so engrossing that the reader can willingly forgive any deficiencies in a style which is always straightforward and unpretentious.

An autobiography for the young reader

How I became a Ballet Dancer, by Peggy van Praagh (Nelson, 5s.).

MOST of the books devoted to ballet nowadays appear to be written for the juvenile reader. Often, as in the present case, this is intentional. Miss Van Praagh's extraordinarily informative book is in two sections. The first deals with her own career and contains a considerable amount of material (on Tudor's Dance Theatre and the London Ballet, and war-time ballet at the Arts Theatre) which will be of interest to many adult ballet-goers.

The last part of the book gives a clear and comprehensive account of the possibilities open to a student wishing to make a career in ballet. Skirting past the age-old clichés on the subject, the author finds time and space to discuss in detail such vital subjects as Equity and contracts.

Two almost completely irrelevant after-thoughts about Miss Van Praagh's book have just struck me. What a pity that she should regard her performance of Swanilda, a role she danced delightfully, as the summit of her dancing career, when earlier she had had the opportunity of creating leading roles in two of the great ballets of our time, *Jardin aux Lilas* and *Dark Elegies*. Furthermore as she obviously has great respect for Antony Tudor, could she not use her influence as Assistant Director of the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet to have Tudor represented in the Wells' repertory?

The Dolin story in fiction

The Blue Train, the story of Anton Dolin, by Joan Selby-Lowndes (Collins, 8s. 6d.).

ANOTHER book in the same series as *How I became a Ballet Dancer* has a title that will intrigue the heart of every small boy—*How I became an Engine Driver*. In case any unwary reader should think that Mr. Dolin had made the best of both of these possible worlds, it should be explained that the Blue Train of the title is derived from the celebrated Diaghilev ballet *Le Train Bleu* in which Dolin had his first great success.

Miss Selby-Lowndes' book is a biography of Dolin from his childhood days up until the triumphant production in Paris of the ballet with which Dolin's name will always be associated, *Le Train Bleu*. Writing for the young reader, Miss Selby-Lowndes has cast her story in the form of a novel.

Bowed and ancient as I am, I found it fascinating and thoroughly enjoyable, even though I admit I read some of the passages dealing with Diaghilev and his entourage with my tongue a little in my cheek. However, I feel certain any member of the audience to whom the book is primarily addressed will have no need of such an expedient to revel in every page of this really exciting story. The author knows the sole secret of writing for the young—she is never condescending, Any of our ballet writers who are just about to give the world another *Ballet made simple for the Kiddywinkies*, are earnestly implored to study her technique before putting pen to paper.

Ballet pops up

Ballet in Pop-Up Action Pictures, by Violet La Mont (Publicity Products).

FOR all children who are addicted to pop-up pictures (so-called because they pop-up) and ballet this little book should fulfil a long-felt want. I might even have long felt the want myself if the author had been a shade more accurate about her facts (e.g. I've got news for her. *Hansel and Gretel* is an O-P-E-R-A not a B-A-L-L-E-T) and drawn her children in class with more regard to decent class-room style. The sloppy arm-positions shown in this book would make a dancing teacher pop-up higher than any of the pictures. However, I am grateful for one inspired piece of cynicism in the text, "The composer and the choreographer *often* work very closely together" (the italics are unfortunately my own) and all will be glad to know that in *Petrouchka*, "One delightful part of this ballet is a dance by the trained bear." Delightful perhaps, but you ought to see how much more fun it is when the bear is not trained.

Clive Barnes

The ormolu of ballet literature

Prestige de la Danse, collected by Jean Guéritte, in collaboration with Monique Lancelot. Illustrated by Monique Lancelot and photographed by Fred Brommett. (Charles Portal,)

THIS is one of those well-produced and well-laid-out books that occur with frequency in French dance literature. Many famous people, including Jean Cocteau, Serge Lifar, Gisèle D'Assailly and a host of others, among them being our own Marie-Françoise Christout, write extremely well on a wide range of subjects without adding anything particularly concrete.

The essays cover most aspects of the dance and the sister arts which go to make ballet—music, painting, literature, etc. The drawings of Monique Lancelot and the photographs of Fred Brommett add considerably to the volume's attractiveness.

Britain's first Prima Ballerina tells her story

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The long-awaited autobiography of Britain's first modern *prima ballerina* is also virtually the inside history of ballet in this country from 1906 to 1935. It was Phyllis Bedells whose pioneer work made possible a *national* ballet tradition and, in association with such well-known figures as Genée, Karsavina, P. J. S. Richardson, Espinosa, Cormani and Arnold Haskell, she succeeded. Today her ideal is realised in the world honour accorded to Margot Fonteyn, Dolin, Helpmann, Markova.

My Dancing Days throws a brilliant light on the early days and famous personalities of ballet. No one is better fitted to write of those formative times than Phyllis Bedells.

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SADLER'S WELLS AT COVENT GARDEN

A galaxy of swans

LE LAC DES CYGNES, which returned to the repertoire on March 22, is without doubt the best of the full-length classics now given by the Sadler's Wells Ballet. It is well designed by Leslie Hurry and well revised by de Valois and Ashton.

Fonteyn has today got the dual Odette-Odile role to perfection. The high *arabesque* and the undulating arms of the Russian school are not for her; in their place is the burnished precision and the beautifully conceived interpretation which has now become symbolic of the English school. In the second act she seems fearful of the consequence of her relationship with the Prince—she is tremulous at the first meeting and hardly daring to believe her fortune in his attachment for her in the love passages. Dancing apart, what makes Fonteyn so great is that she never for one second lets up on her conception of whatever character she happens to be playing.

How different is her third act! Here is the hard glittering creature who simulates devotion for the benefit of the Prince. Not until he has fatally pledged his troth does the full evil character of Odile show itself.

More surprises from Somes

FONTEYN'S perfection is taken for granted, but the greatest surprise of the evening came from the Prince Siegfried of Michael Somes. Not only is Somes' characterisation excellent, but his dancing of the variation was in the Eglevsky-Youskevitch class. He is the best proof of the fact that British male dancers mature late. Somes' career has been continually punctuated by misfortune. At a time when he should have been maturing, he was held back by the war. Since the war he has had several mishaps to his legs and knees, but now he has struck a good patch. His continued success during the American tours has given him fresh confidence and we are now seeing the fine dancer we always knew him to be. He lacks the showy brilliance of a French or Russian dancer, but he has the quiet good taste of what we expect from the best of British male dancers. This recent development dates from the time he went to Paris for a few months to study with Volinine. Perhaps it would be a good idea if a few more Sadler's Wells dancers followed his example and went to study abroad for a short time; nothing but good could come out of such a plan.

When one thinks how quickly so many new productions disintegrate, it is surprising how well this particular *Lac des Cygnes* stands up to time. The mime scenes continue to improve and the dancing as a whole retains a high level, the only falling off is in the *pas de six* in Act I, which seems a muddle without Beriosova, and the Spanish *pas de quatre* in Act III, which is, as it always was, a particularly disagreeable little number—seldom can four dancers ever have looked so foolish. **P.W.**

Nerina and Jackson

PRACTICE, so they say, makes perfect. Although the considerable practice in the role of Odette-Odile in *Swan Lake* gained by Nadia Nerina and Rowena Jackson during the recent American tour has not made their interpretations perfect it has at least enabled them to deepen their portrayals and to bring qualities of light and shade to the role that were absent when these dancers first assumed it last year.

This improvement was particularly noticeable in Jackson. She has now made her Odile an exciting counterpart to her already promising Odette. She has yet to acquire the spectacular *rubato* effects employed by Fonteyn and other unusually musical dancers, but her dancing is at least dead in the centre of the beat, which gives an agreeable crispness to her work. Her acting still needs to be far more controlled from within and less applied from without; her mime, although clear, could do with more grace.

Nerina is potentially a remarkable dancer; there are moments, such as when her leg soars up in an effortless *developpé*, or when she holds a position for a rapturous split-moment, when the world seems literally at her feet. She knows how to use her entire body and even if, like Jackson, her arms are occasionally unyielding, her movements are well-centred and unsprawling. Her physical attributes are such that one wonders whether any impediment in musical sensitivity or emotional comprehension prevents her, for the moment, from reaching the top of her profession.

She would possibly do better if she stopped consciously trying to act and just reacted to the mood and climax of the music. Physically she bears some similarity to Ulanova, and she might find helpful the account of the famous Russian ballerina's approach to Odette-Odile contained in M. Bognanov-Beresovsky's recent book.

Jackson was finely partnered by John Field, who acted and mimed with complete assurance and conviction. His dancing was made notable by its masculine panache. Alexis Rassine, Nerina's Siegfried, has had in the past a fair command of the Romantic manner, but at this performance he was carrying romanticism to the point of affectation, and looked more petulant than noble. Nor were his partnering and dancing in the Black Swan *pas de deux* good enough.

Newcomers to pas de trois

A *PAS DE TROIS* cast new to the Opera House was Anya Linden, Valerie Taylor and David Blair. Although youthful high spirits were more in evidence than classical style all three dancers produced engaging performances of puppy-dog eagerness. We can only hope that when their performances have gained the polish of experience they will not have lost in the process the verve of youth. Blair is certainly flourishing at the Garden, but some of his flourishes in this were over-exaggerated. **C.B.**

Beriosova in new Coppelia

PERHAPS the last two people one would ever think of casting as Swanilda and Franz are Svetlana Beriosova and Philip Chatfield. Both of them are more lyrical than *demi-caractère*. However, both of them in *Coppelia* on March 17 showed that any preconceived notions one might have about these roles would be quite wrong.

Beriosova's Swanilda has already been acclaimed with both the Wells companies, but this was the first time that she appeared in the far more *demi-caractère* production at the Garden. Although the new production does not suit her so well, her performance is enchanting. The trouble probably is that she has developed her ballerina side so much more of late—dancing in full-length classics in large opera houses—that something of that natural bubbling exuberance was bound to vanish. She will probably find her level soon and then be able to give her best to all her roles. If anyone thinks that it is impossible to dance a good Swanilda as well as a good Aurora, Odette or Sylvia should think back to Danilova at her height—no Odette was more regal, no Swanilda more piquant. To develop such a range takes many years and Beriosova has a long time ahead of her. The British public has seen her for so long that it is apt to forget that she is still extremely young.

If Beriosova's performance brought no surprise, then Chatfield's did. It can frequently be embarrassing to see a tall boy up to all the naive tricks of the village Don Juan, but somehow Chatfield brought it off. Although his Franz was quite different to the usual conception of the role, it all seemed perfectly plausible. He partnered excellently and danced a very competent variation; with a bit more elevation his Franz should be the best we have.

New also to the role of Dr. Coppelius was John Hart. A most intelligent performance which had not quite, on this occasion, found its true interpretation. The balance between the jovial and sinister had not been reached. But it was obvious that a real person was doing its best to come through. Since this first night it has been reported that he has developed the role to a remarkable degree. So, we have yet another dancer to add to the increasing list of people who can bring life to these mime roles. In such people the real solid foundation of a company lies. **P.W.**

Cast changes are enjoyable

ONE is always going to see *Coppelia* at Covent Garden these days, and always it has a different cast, and, wonder of wonders, always one enjoys it. Rosemary Lindsay's Swanilda was not new to us, but her first appearance in the present production was marked by a notable improvement in her portrayal. After a charming first act, and an automaton's dance as good as any we have seen, her performance of the Scottish and Spanish numbers and the last act came as a disappointment. Yet there was a great deal of pleasure to be found in her performance which revealed Lindsay as more unrestrained than we remembered.

If the assumption of Franz, his first leading role for the first time, was a strain for Desmond Doyle, he never gave any indication of it. From the way he walked across the stage he might have been a *premier danseur of* some years standing. His acting was pleasant, his partnering stylish and his dancing excellent. As we prophesied when he first joined the company, he will be a male dancer to reckon with in the future.

White as Coppelius

THE second portrayal new to London was Franklin White's Dr. Coppelius. White's intelligent miming has for long been an asset to the company, and his Coppelius was, as would have been expected, well-conceived. At this performance the first act was little more than a sketch, but in the second act his mime carried far more conviction.

Fonteyn and Somes in the pas de deux (*sometimes called* Black Swan) *from the third act of* Le Lac des Cygnes. *In the past it has always been thought that Fonteyn was not as good in this act as in acts II and IV, but her recent performance, when the work was revived at Covent Garden, has shown that even in this act she is unequalled in the way that her characterisation and dancing become inseparable. Somes also has recently added considerably to his performance. Photo: Richard Dormer*

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Pitched in a lower key than some portrayals of the part, he underplayed the comic elements of Coppelius in order to give the role a measure of pathetic dignity. All the business was carefully thought-out (at times a shade too carefully thought-out to be completely natural) and his characterisation was conveyed, as it should be, as much by movement and gesture as by facial expression.

Another first appearance at this same performance was Meriel Evans as Dawn. Here is another young dancer of whom the company can expect fine things in the future. Her dancing has definite traces of style and personality, she has graciousness and charm. This in conjunction with the delicate wit that marked her solitary performance of the *Facade* polka last season, give her distinctive promise.

Dale as Swanilda

MARGARET DALE, the fifth and for the moment the last of the Swanildas who have graced the new production of *Coppelia*, is a veteran to the role of some eight years standing. Her pert personality, breezy sense of fun, and admirably routined dancing are well suited to the part. If she is a little lacking in spontaneity, or if her dancing of the testing last act fails to make the awkward transition from soubrette soloist to classical ballerina demanded by the choreography, these are limitations rather than deficiencies, and within these limitations hers is a more than acceptable performance.

Brian Shaw, the fifth Franz, was Dale's partner. He is not entirely new to the part even though this was his first performance of it at Covent Garden. As he has shown, in *A Wedding Bouquet* and *Bonne-Bouche* among other ballets, he has a lively sense of humour which was given full scope in this, his first full-length assignment. His partnering showed strength and consideration for his ballerina, while his dancing, though not at its highest standard, was forceful and musical. Fonteyn apart, he strikes one as being possibly the dancer in the company most sensitive to music.

The Dr. Coppelius was, once again, Franklin White, who had obviously taken the opportunity of performance practice to tidy some of the details of his portrayal. At this performance he gave more prominence to the first act than previously and so gave a better balanced performance.

Cast changes

THERE have been few cast changes as yet in the company's general repertory, the most important of these being the appearances of Linden and Blair as Queen of the Earth and her Consort, in *Homage to the Queen*. Before this all previous changes in the ballet's cast had been to its detriment, now for the first time a change occurred for the better. Linden gave an able performance, a little lacking in finesse and placing. As her partner Blair struck his best Covent Garden form yet. His brilliant dancing of the variation, which hitherto had always seemed somewhat dull, revealed in it unsuspected qualities. **C.B.**

CONTEMPORARY DANCE THEATRE

LISA CZOBEL and Alexander von Swaine gave a recital at the Contemporary Dance Theatre Centre, Toynbee Hall, on May 5.

Czobel, a well-known ex-Jooss soloist, and Swaine, one of the more prominent contemporary German dancers, who last appeared in England shortly before the war, gave a programme more diversified in subject matter than in style. Like all such programmes it was a mixed bag of good, bad and indifferent. Neither dancer is young but both are very experienced, so that even the bad items had the grace to plumb the depths in a thoroughly workmanlike and professional manner. Swaine did, however, make one bad error in starting his programme with the *farucca* from *Le Tricorne*, the more so as this proved so much like Massine in choreography, and so much unlike Massine in execution. Neither was there any good reason, in his programme for a Teutonically erotic version of *L'Apres midi d'un Faune*.

The pair danced with that mask-like intensity that I personally (and possibly incorrectly) associate with the Mary Wigman school. The face, though sometimes used to register simple emotions, plays a relatively unimportant part in the expression of their dance. Indeed, when for a Stravinsky-doll number the faces were actually masked the dancers appeared to be at no great disadvantage. The dance vocabulary, to anyone fresh from the spate of movement coined by the inexhaustible Martha Graham, was simplicity itself, but was used with feeling.

In at least two of his dances Swaine showed considerable artistry; a gently hypnotic dance *To the Goddess of the Moon*, and in a fascinating study in climax called *The Dervish*. Among Czobel's individual dances her *War Sonata*, somewhat reminiscent of passages in Jooss's *The Green Table*, was probably the most impressive.

The truly rewarding items in the recital were the two duets which ended each half of the programme. The first of these, *Cappricho*, was a wild, grotesque Spanish dance inspired by the Goya etchings. I have seen many dances purporting to originate from Goya, but never one that so faithfully and painfully caught the bitter, tortured spirit of the artist. It was a *tour de force* that would on its own account have justified the dancers' journey from Germany.

The programme ended with two *Bavarian Popular Dances*, a short solo for Swaine called *The Harvester*, and a duet, *Landler*. These not only revealed great gusto and vitality, but introduced a note of humour that had been conspicuously lacking from the earlier proceedings.

In these numbers and the Goya duet, Czobel and Swaine showed themselves to be important dancers who, integrated into a company, have still a lot to offer the dance world.

The costumes, like the choreography, the work of the dancers, were of varying success, while the lighting, possibly due to deficiencies in the theatre's switchboard, was hard and unsubtle, adding little to the dances' atmosphere. The piano-playing by Hartmug Klug, the pair's own pianist, was uniformly excellent. The dancers could hardly have had a more sympathetic and brilliant accompanist.

The directors of the Contemporary Dance Theatre Centre can congratulate themselves on this visit. If they can introduce interesting European dancers to modern dance enthusiasts they will be fulfilling a valuable function. **C.B.**

*The second sequence—*Abstraction*—from Kenneth Macmillan's* The Dreamers *on television. Maryon Lane is seen with (L to R) Walter Trevor, David Sheilds, Maurice Metliss with Shirley Bishop, Sara Neil and Madeline White kneeling.*

Photo: Paul Wilson.

GREEK DANCE

LIKE Isadora Duncan, Ruby Ginner was inspired by the artistic relics of ancient Greece to devise a new kind of dancing. Miss Duncan's revolt helped to found the modern dance movement now flourishing in America and continental Europe. Miss Ginner's researches manifested themselves in a lecture-recital at the Rudolf Steiner Hall, on March 27, at which she attempted, with the assistance of Nancy Sherwood and students of the Ginner Mawer and Arts Educational Schools, to show the value of her "Greek dance" as an educational training and as an art.

The company was entirely female, and the absence of boys seemed due more to a kind of militant feminism than to economic necessity. The technique employed was a cross between the movements of an ordinary physical training lesson and those of a children's ballet class for beginners. You or I could have danced almost anything on the programme. The music, mainly from popular classical composers, seemed less than appropriate, and most of the costumes were dull. As an art, in fact, the Greek dance appeared somewhat limited.

As an educational training, however, the system provides an excellent form of exercise for the daughters of gentlefolk. It will undoubtedly help to promote health, and can do no possible harm.

John Percival

TELEVISION

The Dreamers

Given on April 1st: Choreography, Kenneth Macmillan: Orchestra conducted by Ted Heath: Decor, Michael Yates. Produced by Naomi Capon: Music: *Lament*, Pete Rugolo; *Abstraction*, Stan Kenton and Pete Rugolo; *Monotony*, Stan Kenton and Pete Rugolo.

Cast:

From the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet

MARYON LANE, DAVID POOLE, PIRMIN TRECU, and

Sara Neil, Maurice Metliss, Shirley Bishop, David Shields, Madeleine White, Walter Trevor.

HAPPILY for all concerned, the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet were able to give a television performance of Kenneth Macmillan's ballet before leaving for their South African tour. This work was first given under the title of *Somnambulism* by the Sadler's Wells Choreographic Group on a Sunday evening last year. The only major difference being the title, which has now lost that element of originality which this enterprising production merits.

The scenario concerns three young people, who are driven to sleep-walking by their dreams; in which they are confronted by their nightmarish figures and apparitions, who proceed to torment them.

The action takes place in a vast hall, excellently designed by Michael Yates, with long unexplored shadowy passages leading off into the unknown darkness; this set captured a great deal of the essential dreamlike atmosphere of the ballet.

The curtain rose on the three principal dancers lying prostrate, face-downwards, across three stairs which stretched from one side of the set to the other; as they slept, first the hands, then the feet, finally the whole bodies of their tormentors took shape, gradually being superimposed on to the screen.

The first sequence, *Lament*, was well danced by Pirmin Trecu, who admirably conveyed an impression of a man balancing precariously on the brink of a precipice, never quite plunging into the abyss below.

In *Abstraction*, Maryon Lane's portrayal was exquisite. A young girl lost in her thoughts, space, striving frantically to ward off the hands of her tormentors, which unceasingly clutched towards her.

In *Monotony*, David Poole gave a terrifying study of a young man, rocked by conflicting emotions, as if in a brainstorm being mentally tortured, while being nearly driven mad by the monotonous figures, who swooped down upon him; dancing wildly to the pulsating rhythmic music of Stan Kenton and Pete Rugolo.

The ballet closed with an effective awakening sequence. The dancers, rubbing their eyes, gradually realised that all they had suffered had been a dream. They grasped each others hands in relief; but as the awfulness of the situation returned to them, they shrunk back, hiding their faces with their hands, not bearing to think back on the events that so recently had occurred.

The dancing attained a high standard throughout, the principals being superb; their facial expression being noticeably effective. Kenneth Macmillan has given us a first class ballet abounding with ideas; a ballet with a strong impact, full of a feeling of dramatic intensity.

The music of Stan Kenton and Pete Rugolo was well played by Ted Heath, whose orchestra are not exactly familiar figures in the world of ballet.

The black costumes were simple and most effective; proving a perfect contrast to the brilliant, glaring emptiness of the set. The cameras and the lighting were skilfully handled, the production being in the very capable hands of Naomi Capon.

Nicholas Baker

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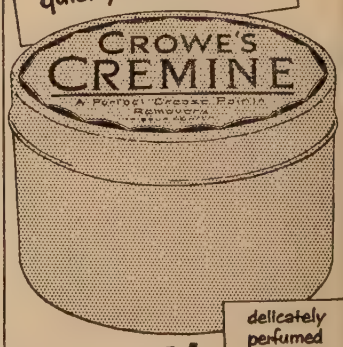

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Dance and Dancers . . . in America

by Arthur Todd

AT the moment, ballet is non-existent in New York though Ballet Theatre continues to break box office records across the country during its current tour. Dance, however, is far from dead in Manhattan and the best example of this at the moment is in two new musical productions.

BALLET IN MUSICALS

The Golden Apple

BRITISH audiences who remember Hanya Holm's wonderful dances for *Kiss Me, Kate* would be similarly enchanted with her brilliant choreography for a new production, *The Golden Apple*. Like *Ballet Ballads* of a few seasons ago, this new work was written by John Latouche, has a score by Jerome Moross, and is set to music throughout. It is a re-telling of the story of the Iliad and his Homeric parallel set in the State of Washington, in the American north-west, at the turn of this century. Thus, Ulysses is now a soldier returned from the Spanish-American war, Penelope is a housewife, Paris is a travelling salesman, and Helen, Hector and Patroculus, Calypso and Circe are similarly brought up to date.

The dance numbers in this show fare far better than the production as a whole and it is these that best demonstrate composer Latouche's rhyming wit and Hanya Holm's brilliantly comic choreographic powers.

Her staging of *By Goona-Goona Lagoon* stops the show nightly and is the most hilarious dance number of recent seasons. This biting satirical comment on the Dorothy Lamour-type Polynesian song discloses a hip-swinging singer backed by a group of garlanded dancing girls, ranging in size from tall to short, dancing with a completely dead-pan concentration.

There is a wonderfully dated and evocative cane-swinging strut-and-shuffle number that has been devised for Jack Whiting. Elsewhere, however, Miss Holm also provided some stunning straight dance numbers and one of the best of these, *Come Along, Boys*, a dance of the returned soldiers, fills the stage with a wonderful series of movement inventions that includes a tug of war and a circular formation resembling a carousel.

Interestingly enough, this production, which opened to critical rave reviews at the new off-Broadway Phoenix Theatre, has since been moved uptown to Alvin Theatre where it is now enjoying the wider popularity it so richly merits.

The Girl in Pink Tights

JEANMAIRE, who has been a great favourite with New York audiences since her first appearances with the Ballets de Paris in 1949, has, in her new role as a dancing-singing star, also conquered the Broadway theatrical field. Theatrical critics, as a matter of fact, have been hailing Jeanmaire as the first ranking musical comedy star to emerge since the debuts of Ethel Merman and Mary Martin.

The high level of Agnes de Mille's dances in *The Girl in Pink Tights*, chiefly centred around or focusing upon Jeanmaire's superb theatrical talents, are the major assets of this otherwise routine and old fashioned musical show.

Because Jeanmaire is cast as the ballerina of a French company visiting New York in the 1860's, there are reasons enough for her to dance a great deal as well as to sing and act. Furthermore, since Agnes de Mille has a great sense of theatre-craftmanship, her use of dance animates this production to a noteworthy degree.

Quite wisely, a dance opens this show and this ballet class scene serves admirably to set the period carrying with it a wonderful sense of mood that is most Degas-like. This scene also serves to introduce Jeanmaire as well as her dancing partner, Alexandre Kalioujny. Here the very basic ballet exercises and variations have been formalised and transformed into a choreographic entity that progresses logically in the plot.

In the middle of the first act there is a *pas de deux* for Jeanmaire and Kalioujny that ranks with the finest that this choreographer has yet devised for a ballet or the theatre. In form it is so simple that it appears spontaneous and effortless and it is danced superbly against the dimly lit surroundings of a rehearsal stage.

Two large dance numbers occur in the second act. The first of these, *Bacchanale*, is a wonderful satire on nineteenth century ballet spectacles that finds Alexandre Kalioujny as a stalwart Dionysius and Jenny Workman flying dizzily through the air on wires as a wayward nymph. Again, there is the Grand Imperial Ballet that includes devils, evil spirits and bats and with Jeanmaire as Hecate and Kalioujny as Lucifer. Miss de Mille also staged the musical numbers, giving them vitality and pace, and here she was especially successful in the movement and gesture patterns that materially heightened the impact of Jeanmaire's husky-voiced songs.

AGNES DE MILLE DANCE THEATRE

LATE in March, the Agnes de Mille Dance Theatre made a one night visit in New York when they played a highly successful engagement at the Brooklyn Academy of Music. A distinguished audience was on hand to welcome this new company and it proved to be a very excellent dance group. The programme was at its best in two large dance works—*Ballad* (adapted from and an extension of the dances from *Brigadoon*) and *Gold Rush*, (dances from the more recent *Paint Your Wagon*).

In each, James Mitchell danced the lead male role superbly, was ably supported by Lidija Franklin in *Ballad* and Gemze de Lappe in *Gold Rush*. Other dances on the programme included Gemze de Lappe in *Ballet Class*, the by-now famous early de Mille solo; *Dances of Elegance* 1860-1920, a satirical suite; *The Cherry Tree Legend*, a mountain folklore legend; and *Hell on Wheels*, a lusty dance picture of the American west during the 1860's.

There will be no tour by this important new company before the 1955-1956 season because Miss de Mille is already at work adding to the repertoire, creating new works as well as re-staging others from her extensive repertory. In addition, other dance works by outside choreographers will be commissioned along with new scores. Obviously, the results of such a broad plan may well merit great promise as far as the establishment of a truly and representative American dance company is concerned.

NEWS IN BRIEF

BALLET Theatre, as noted previously, is currently enjoying its most successful tour in its history at the moment. Already, however, extensive plans are underway for the company's fifteenth anniversary season and, thus far, it has been announced that William Dollar has been commissioned to stage a new work titled *Ondine*. There will also be a new ballet by Valerie Bettis, remembered for *Streetcar Named Desire* for the Slavenska-Franklin Company; also a classical work by Leonide Massine.

During the summer months the major part of the company will be occupied with a series of performances at out-door stadiums and music festivals before going into rehearsal for the autumn season. In addition, the Ballet Theatre Company will be responsible for the creation, staging and performance of the dances for the Jones Beach outdoor musical extravaganza, *Arabian Nights*, that will star Lauritz Melchior. Yurik Lozowski will direct the dances for this production.

LOSSES and Gains——according to published estimates, the New York City Ballet lost $40,000 during its ten-week season at the New York City Center . . . A certificate filed last month in N.Y. County Court disclosed that the Grand Ballet de Monte Carlo, managed by Marquis George de Cuevas, lost $147,000 during the past fourteen months of its European engagements.

MICHAEL KIDD was awarded the Antoinette Perry citation for outstanding choreography on Broadway for the 1953-1954 season for his dances for *Can-Can*. This honour was conferred upon him by the American Theatre Wing, the organisation that saluted him twice previously for his dances for *Finians' Rainbow* and *Guys and Dolls*.

JOHN BUTLER, now on his fourth season as choreographer for the New York City Opera Company, has been signed, together with his dance company, for a tour next season under the auspices of Columbia Artists Management.

JOSE GRECO and Company opened a two-week New York season at the Broadway Theatre on April 26, too late for review in this issue.

Below: A ballet scene in the Girl in Pink Tights *which has choreography by Agnes de Mille.*
Right: Jeanmaire and Kalioujny in the pas de deux *from the first act of the same musical.*
Photos: Talbot

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Dance and Dancers . . . IN FRANCE

The jury at the 1954 Paris Opera examinations. From left to right: Aveline, Lifar, Bondeville, Dame Ninette de Valois (guest of honour), Lehmann, Micheline Bardin, Madeline Lafon, Christiane Vaussard, Max Bozzoni. *Photo: Erlanger*

PARIS OPÉRA

WHILE the performances of *Obéron* and *Les Indes Galantes* run their course, the evenings reserved to ballet alone are naturally few and offer programmes which would gain by a little more variety.

It is to be hoped that *L'Oiseau de feu*, now in active rehearsal, and the new production of *Giselle* for which Carzou's décors are being prepared, will satisfy the public's desires in April. These are events to look forward to. Meanwhile it is the dance examinations which have been the feature of this month's activity in the life of the ballet company.

Annual examinations

AS every year, the doors opened on the morning of March 12 before small groups of friends and the initiated, admitted to encourage the terrified *quadrilles* and the trembling *coryphees* by their silent presence. The jury, installed in the midst of an ocean of empty orchestra stalls behind a green table, was composed of Mlles. Christiane Vaussard, Micheline Bardin, Madeleine Lafon, and MM. Lehmann, Lifar, Efimoff, and Bondeville, to whom was added a guest of honour, Dame Ninette de Valois.

This solemn test can be regarded as valuable evidence of the quality of the *corps de ballet* of the principal theatre of France. It allows one to discern promising talent, to observe the conscientiousness and application of the most modest dancer, and in the regulation variations to note strong points and weak. While some dancers may appear destined to an inglorious career in the *corps de ballet*, others already show promise of becoming future soloists; thus hopes are born which later may perhaps be destroyed by lack of industry.

For a brief period each of them appears alone, as though she were a prima ballerina, on the immense stage before the battery of stern and discerning eyes, and any who are adjudged too heavy will be rejected.

The quality of the groupings is formed by the conjunction of these individual talents, and in the hierarchic democracy which is the Opéra Ballet each member can hope to attain the highest rank, as have Yvette Chauviré, Michel Renault, and Jean-Paul Andréani. It is now that the stakes are laid for a year, and we all know the importance of a year in the ephemeral domain of the dance.

In accordance with tradition, the morning is reserved for the girls, and the first to be called are the most obscure, whose past as *petits rats* is still very near. Summoned by the ringing of a bell they follow one another in the two variations laid down. Patiently a pianist accompanies their steps on an instrument introduced at the Opéra in 1886 by Massenet during the rehearsals of *Les Deux Pigeons* to replace the violin formerly used.

Guided by their teacher, Mlle. Guillot, the second quadrille revealed the precision of Mlle. Palkina, the charm of Mlle. Dubarry, while on the other hand Mlle. Pernelle was generally found disappointing. The variations chosen by Mlle. Lamballe for the first quadrille were rather dull but allowed Mlle. Motte to give proof of her elevation and to be promoted two grades to the rank of *petit sujet*. It is possible that one day this sixteen-year-old hope will shine on the topmost rung.

The coryphées, pupils of Suzanne Lorcia, then showed their paces in the fire-fly variation from *Blanche-Neige*, Mlles. Bertagnol and Gary being particularly remarked.

Then, among the *petits sujets*, pupils of M. Aveline, Mlles. Collement, Grimoin and Vauchelle distinguished themselves in an extract from the ballet in *Faust*.

Finally the *grands sujets* went through the long and complex variation which Nina Vyroubova first danced in *Variations*, a test which seemed to be better suited to the quiet romantic style of Jacqueline Rayet than to the brilliance of Mlle. Arniel or the elegant simplicity of Mlle. Even.

Less numerous and easier to judge by their personal technique, the men attracted less attention. One must, however, mention MM. Labis and Duchêne of the second quadrille, and M. Heyraud of the first quadrille whose shortness will limit his employment; all three being pupils of M. Legrand.

For the coryphées, the fine teacher, M. Roger Ritz, had selected a solo which was brilliantly performed by MM. Mayer and Dussaigne.

M. Duthoit, in the class of *petits sujets*, distinguished himself in two variations chosen by Harald Lander from *Etudes*, while Andréani's variation in *Grand Pas* displayed the talent of MM. Touroude and Duflot. Once again these examinations gave proof of the exceptional qualities of the *corps de ballet* of the Opéra.

SOVIET BALLET

FROM May 8 to 29 a company of Russian dancers from the Kirov Theatre, Leningrad, and the Bolshoi Theatre, Moscow, will appear at the Paris Opéra. The artistes will include Galina Ulanova and Anissimova, *danseuses-étoiles* of Moscow, Mlles. Natalia Dudinsky, Alle Shelest, Olga Moyoslieva, Raissa Stroutchkova, MM. Dubrovsky, Farmanyantz, Preobajensky, Douri Guadov, Alex. Makarov, and Constantine Seroniev, *danseur-étoile* and ballet-master. Among the ballets to be given will probably be extracts from Prokofieff's *Romeo and Juliet* and *Cinderella*, arranged by Sergeyev, *The Fountain of Bakhchisaray, The Bronze Horse, Flames of Paris, Le Lac des Cygnes, Gayaneh, Giselle, Don Quixote*. The Paris Opéra orchestra will accompany the ballets.

BALLETS DE LOS ANGELES

THE long-awaited première of the Ballets de Los Angeles proved a disappointment. This setback, however, in no way justified the management of the Théâtre de l'Empire to cancel so abruptly the agreement which it had made with the young company it had brought to Europe. David Lichine's position is secure enough for this failure in his career to be considered as an accident. No doubt he will learn a useful lesson from it, and in time have his revenge.

On behalf of the Institut Choréographique, Serge Lifar paid tribute to his former companion of the Ballets Russes and the Ballets de Monte Carlo. At a reception at the Opéra, he recalled common memories, deplored the hostile attitude of the theatre management, and appealed for artistic solidarity. Very moved, Lichine expressed his sorrow at the unexpected turn of events and his desire to continue his efforts. We hope that his good intentions and those of his young company will one day have their deserts.

AFRICAN BALLET OF KEITA FODEBA

"IN working out our present programme . . . it was our principal aim quite simply to recapture some of the characteristic moments in our way of life. To do this we had recourse to two apparently distinct sources: the traditional Africa of our ancestors and the Africa of today becoming impregnated little by little with Western civilisation," declared Keita Fodeba at the outset of his season at the Théâtre des Champs-Elysées.

The Parisian public had last year appreciated the concern for authenticity of this company which scorns concessions and the easy appeal of the music hall. Only one step was needed to transform this into a stage show without destroying the original flavour.

Recently on the same stage the Redskin Ballet resulted once again in the failure of a pseudo-exoticism and its aesthetic poverty. Coming from the banks of the Niger the company of Keita Fodeba had a difficult task before them. They had taken pains; their dynamic simplicity was to earn them the esteem of everyone. Borrowed directly from folklore, their dances and songs, without being unnecessarily spectacular, evoked their native country.

Here was no elaborate art such as those of the Orient or Spain, but the dancing of a people, each member of whom dances for himself just as he walks, and learns to sing as he does to talk. Despite some slight transpositions which were unavoidable, it consists of a series of images taken from family life, and their freshness facilitates that escape which is the very purpose of the spectacle.

Against a setting the simplicity of which matters little, and bathed in the suggestive brilliance of spot-lights, are set in motion dark silhouettes clad in red and white, straw-skirts, and jingling amulets.

Ritual dances, dances of magic and incantation, alternate with harvest and betrothal ceremonies. To this evocation of traditional Africa are added more modern impressions, the *Mêmodie Tam-tam* trio interpreted with great assurance to fishermen's songs, love-songs, and boating songs with colourful names like Miabele, Jomba-Bango, Mamadou, and Couri-couri, as well as several creole numbers.

The African tale of *Sini-Mory*, which was well staged, and punctuated with arpeggios on the guitar and modulated cries, has real expressive qualities, although in the general opinion of the public it was eclipsed by the fantastic demonstrations of the Bongolo Fire-eaters.

Excellent rhythm, a conciseness which avoids dullness, and the pleasant personalities of the performers, are the hall-marks of this spectacle which owes no debt to Broadway or Harlem.

In addition to the singer n'Doumbé, one must praise the conviction and dynamism of the whole company, the intelligent staging, and the sincerity of its director, Keita Fodeba.

NEWS IN BRIEF

TERMINATING a very interesting series of lectures devoted to the dance, the competition and referendum of young choreographers took place at the Salle Pleyel before several thousand members of the Jeunesses Musicales de France, spectators transformed into critics. A jury composed of MM. Nicoly, Lifar, Tcherkas, Brieux, Quinault, Rayne and Mlle. Mail, had first of all selected from ten new ballets, four works by MM. Fosca, Duflot, Sanders and Paris. It was *Les Javelot d'Artémis* by Igor Fosca, which carried away the first prize in the opinion of the young public. Very Lifarian in its inspiration, this work has a certain affinity with Poulenc's *Aubade*, and is to be performed throughout France during a cycle of lectures on the dance given under the auspices of the J.M.F. Roland Duflot, *grand sujet* of the Opéra, obtained second place with a pleasant rendering of Gershwin's *American in Paris*. This undertaking does honour to its originators, MM. Nicoly and Lifar, and deserves to be repeated in the future.

AS well as Leslie Caron, heroine of the film *The Glass Slipper*, the Ballets de Roland Petit have just been engaged by M.G.M. Shooting is to start in Hollywood in April. The young company will therefore prolong its stay in the U.S.A.

THERE are reports that Paris may see the Japanese Kabuki dancers who are at present appearing with great success on Broadway.

FOLLOWING a visit to Cannes, the Grand Ballet du Marquis de Cuevas have gone to Egypt, where they will remain in Cairo for a month, before going to Alexandria until April 11. On their return, they are expected to appear in Belgium and in May they will travel to South America (Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay).

MARIA FERES, who is obtaining a great success in Gluck's *Orphée*, wishes to restore the opera-ballet tradition of the eighteenth century. She intends to present an evening's programme of several one-act works, by a company of singers, dancers and musicians whose number will not exceed twenty-five. Chamber opera-ballet.

THE Rene Blum prize has just been awarded to Claudine Barbini, of the Ballets de Roland Petit.

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Ballet Dates

SADLER'S WELLS BALLET
at Covent Garden

April
26 *Patineurs, Symphonic Variations, Homage to the Queen*
29 *Veneziana, Giselle* (Fonteyn, Somes)

May
1 *Veneziana, Checkmate, Homage to the Queen*
3 *Patineurs, The Shadow, Homage to the Queen.*
5 *Lac des Cygnes* (Fonteyn, Somes).
7 *Checkmate, Homage to the Queen, Patineurs.*
8 (M) *Lac des Cygnes* (Nerina, Rassine).
8 (E) *Lac des Cygnes* (Jackson, Field).
10 *Coppelia* (Navarre, Boulton).
15 (M) *Sleeping Beauty* (Fonteyn, Somes).
15 (E) *Sleeping Beauty* (Nerina, Rassine).
18 *Coppelia* (Beriosova, Chatfield).
21 *The Shadow, Ballet Imperial, Tiresias.*
22 *Coppelia* (Beriosova, Chatfield).

May — **BALLET RAMBERT**
17 Playhouse, Oxford
31 Open-air Theatre, Battersea Park (two weeks)

June
14 Sadler's Wells Theatre (2 weeks)
28 Theatre Royal, Windsor (2 weeks)

July
26 Tor and Torrington Festival, Barnstaple

August
9 Birmingham Repertory, Birmingham (3 weeks)

September
6 Civic Theatre, Chesterfield
13 Marlowe Theatre, Canterbury

April — **BALLET COMIQUE**
26 Royal Court, Liverpool

May
3 Grand, Blackpool
10 Grand, Leeds
17 King's, Edinburgh
24 King's, Glasgow
31 New, Oxford

June
7 New, Oxford
14 Royal, Newcastle
21 Pavilion, Bournemouth
28 Opera House, Manchester

July — **FESTIVAL BALLET**
12 Royal Festival Hall, London (12 weeks)

MOSCOW STATE DANCE COMPANY BERYOZKA
at the Stoll Theatre, London
April 28 for three and a half weeks

CONTEMPORARY DANCE THEATRE
at Toynbee Hall, London

May
17 (at 8 p.m.) Vera Goldman from the Israeli Opera Dance Group. Geraldine Stephenson. British Dance Theatre.

BALLET FILMS
at the National Film Theatre, London

May — **Great Dancers**
23-26 *Pavlova, Rambert Films*
30-June 2 *Ulanova* (extracts from *Concert of Stars, Gala Festival), Black Swan*

June — **Ballet from Five Countries**
6-9 *Masowsze* (Polish), *Red Shoes* (Ballet sequence), *American in Paris* (Ballet sequence), *The River* (Indian dance extract), *Wedding at Ecser* (Hungarian), *Moor's Pavane* or *Lament* (Jose Limon)

All dates in these columns are correct at time of going to press. We take no responsibility for alterations.

Ballet Correspondents

(Abbreviations: b.c.—ballet correspondence; m.—male; f.—female; m.a.—my age; o.i.—other interests; ls.—languages; p.r.—photograph requested)

DORIS HUNTER, 2 Knoll Road, Bexley, Kent, wants b.c., m. or f., any age, London area, m.a. 23, o.i. music, opera, foreign films, theatre.

KATHLEEN HAYTAR, "Roselea," 3 Whitley Road, Thornhill, Dewsbury, Yorks, wants b.c., m. or f., age 19-22, anywhere, m.a. 17½, o.i. music, theatre, art, reading.

ISOBEL URQUHART, c/o Fowler, 172 Crown Street, Aberdeen, Scotland, wants b.c., f., age 18-20, in a London ballet school, m.a. 18, o.i. opera, classical music, painting, drama.

JACQUELINE MUNRO, The Bernard Arms Hotel, Gt. Kimble, Nr. Aylesbury, Bucks, wants b.c., m. or f., age 15-17, anywhere, esp. London or abroad, m.a. 15, o.i. reading, art, theatre, music, films, p.r.,

LINDA BOSSON, 73 Raglan Street, Mosman, N.S.W., Australia, wants b.c., m. or f., age 13-16, in England, France, Germany, Switzerland, m.a. 14, o.i. art, writing, acting, skating, animals, poetry and reading, p.r., all answered.

IAN STEWART, c/o 104 Earl Street, Northampton, wants b.c., m., anywhere, age 20-25, m.a. 22, o.i. theatre, films, music, p.r., all answered.

NEXT MONTH

Look for Beryl Goldwyn on the front of the June number of *Dance and Dancers* which will also contain:

Picture supplement of Ballets de France de Janine Charrat, particularly of *Les Algues*. The Moscow State Dance Company. The Importance of Ballet films. Dance Notation. The Royal Winnipeg Ballet. Louis-Bernand Castelli.

Reviews and pictures of all the important dance events all over the world. All the usual features.

COVER STORIES

This month's front cover by Houston Rogers, is of Violetta Elvin in *Lac des Cygnes*, Act II. She returns to Covent Garden in May after six months absence owing to a leg injury.

ELVIN (then Violetta Prokhorova) trained at the Bolshoi Theatre School, from the age of eight. During the war, she was evacuated to Tashkent and given leading ballerina roles in the company formed there. The Bolshoi Theatre asked her to return to them in Kuibyshev. Later she returned to Moscow where she danced soloist and small leading roles. Coming to England with her English husband she joined Sadler's Wells Ballet in 1946. She immediately danced in the Bluebird *pas de deux* with great success and has since risen to take all the leading ballerina roles. She has made a number of films and several guest appearances with other companies. At La Scala, Milan, she had a great triumph.

This month's back cover, by Peter Grugeon, is of Xenia Palley and Stanley Williams, who are both principal dancers of the newly-formed Ballet Comique, which makes its debut this month.

XENIA PALLEY has an American father, a Russian mother, was born in Chicago and has lived in Paris. She was a soloist with the de Cuevas company for some time and has since made many appearances in concert groups. She was awarded the Rene Blum Prize two years ago.

Stanley Williams is one of the principal dancers of the Royal Danish Ballet and has been brought up in that company. He is in England on six months' leave.

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36 ,,	Spot Glitter Nets	10/9
36 ,,	Spun Rayons	3/11 & 4/6
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36 ,,	Diamenté Satins	12/11

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